KENTUCKY CENTER FOR SCHOOL SAFETY

IN COLLABORATION WITH R.E.A.C.H. OF LOUISVILLE, INC.

KENTUCKY 2000: SAFE SCHOOLS DATA PROJECT

Statewide and Regional Data Summary

Kentucky 2000: Safe Schools Data Project

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Executive Summary

The Kentucky Safe Schools Data Project has completed its second year of data-gathering on law and school board policy violations, legal and disciplinary consequences, victim and offender information, security measures, and prevention efforts in schools. Mandated by Kentucky Revised Statute 158, the project is a collaboration between the Kentucky Center for School Safety, Research Triangle Institute of North Carolina (web-enabled data entry), R.E.A.C.H. of Louisville (statistical analysis), and the Kentucky Department of Education.

The present report delineates statewide and regional totals for the 1999-2000 school year, and will be followed by reports providing more refined description of these same data in relation to gender, race, grade level, socio-economic, and related variables, and school district comparative data. The purposes of these reports are to: (1) supply educators, parents and community with general descriptive information about school safety; (2) provide state and local school officials with more detailed information that can inform school improvement efforts and reduce risk to students; and, (3) enable judgments to be made about the extent to which schools are becoming more safe environments for learning.

Nationally, there is considerable evidence that schools are becoming more safe. Since 1992, the total number of school-associated violent deaths has decreased. There is less than one in a million chance of violent death in school. The most common crime in schools is theft, which has been trending downward since 1993, as have student weapon carrying and physical fighting. All of these declines mirror drops in the overall crime rate in society. At the same time, there are serious and abiding concerns at the national level. Too many children and school personnel are the victims of violent crime in schools, weapon carrying remains a concern, students report that they do not always feel safe, drug and alcohol use on school property has not subsided, and a wide range of disciplinary problems continue to impede teaching and learning in schools.

In Kentucky, violations of law (ranging from serious crimes against persons or property, to less serious crimes that may result in arrest) have declined significantly, according to school reports. The magnitude of some of these declines may be a function of inaccuracies of incidence reporting by schools in the first year of data gathering, but the results are still encouraging. Violations that appear resistant to change are those associated with alcohol use, buying or receiving stolen property, sex-related offenses (not including rape or prostitution), and possession of non-firearm weapons. There have also been dramatic declines across the two years in the number of school – reported suspensions, expulsions, and alternative placements associated with law violations. Some concern regarding school compliance with mandated reporting to law enforcement is suggested by the data. Regional comparisons of rates of law violations reveal considerable (and sometimes surprising) variability from one category to another. Jefferson County (which includes Louisville) exhibits high rates of law violations in some areas (e.g., drug violations, assault). However, the region with the most uniformly high rates is the central region of the state (including Lexington).

Regarding school board policy violations, dramatic reductions in incidence are even more apparent than what is seen for law violations (possibly again because baseline data are less accurate). Defiance of authority, fighting, and threats and intimidation result in the most severe forms of school discipline. The most common punishments (of the five tracked) are out-of-school suspension, alternative placement, and corporal punishment (in that order). Over the two years of data-gathering, there is a dramatic reduction in expulsion with educational services, and a concomitant increase in the number of suspensions and corporal punishments. The southeastern Kentucky has the highest overall rates of board policy violations**.** Jefferson County has among the lowest in classroom disturbance and defiance of authority, but the highest in threats and intimidation. Statewide, a total of 17,366 individuals (students, staff, and others) were reported as victims of school violence (in all its forms) in 1999-2000.

Kentucky's schools continue to increase the security measures employed to keep students safe, with 96.8% requiring visitor sign-in and 93.1% closing the school campus during lunch. Significant effort has gone into controlling access to school grounds, but there have been slight declines in the use of drug sweeps and random metal detectors. Virtually all school buildings offer one or more prevention or early intervention programs, and the percent of offerings within each category has increased in nearly all categories of programming. Based on self-report, these programs appear to be implemented effectively.

School Safety as a National, State, and Local Priority

- *April 20, 1997, Littleton, Colorado – 2 students with guns go on a shooting rampage, resulting in the deaths of one teacher and 11 classmates, wounding dozens more, and ending with their suicides.*

- *December 1, 1997, West Paducah, KY – Three students are killed and five others wounded by a 14-year old student.*

- *March 24, 1998, Jonesboro, AR – Two boys, ages 11 and 13, open fire from the woods after setting off a false alarm at a middle school. Four girls and a teacher are shot to death and 10 people are wounded.*

- *April 24, 1998, Edinboro, PA – A science teacher is shot to death in front of students at an 8th grade graduation dance.*

- *March 19, 1998, Fayetteville, TN – An 18-year old honor student opens fire in a high school parking lot, killing another student who was dating his ex-girlfriend.*

- *May 21, 1998, Springfield, OR – A 15-year-old boy kills two and injures more than 20 at a high school. His parents are found murdered at their home.*

Prompted by an emerging national consensus that schools need to become more safe for children (in part due to high profile incidents such as the above), numerous studies have been conducted to assess the magnitude of school violence and drug abuse in schools. These have led to a considerable expansion of school-based services and programs to improve school safety, so that teaching and learning can proceed unimpeded.

O ccurring over the past decade, incidents such as these have shocked and devastated the American people, raised fundamental questions about the nature of our society, and called into question our ability to protect children in schools. While there has been much media attention to these "high glare" incidents, increasing attention has also been paid to less terrifying (but nonetheless disturbing) rates of problem behavior in schools. Many such behaviors represent violations of law, such as assaults, rapes, larceny and theft, and bringing weapons to school. More common are non-criminal violations of school board policy in areas such as defiance of authority, class disturbances, threats and intimidation, and tobacco violations.

School violence does not appear to be a unitary problem confined to a certain group of students or communities. For example, while some incidents are associated with students who have been identified as having emotional or behavioral disabilities, many are not. And, these problems do not appear to be confined to troubled, inner-city schools attended by students with economic disadvantages. In fact, across the nation, some of the most troubling incidents have occurred in suburban, well-funded schools or rural, closely-knit communities. Some of the students involved were not identified previously as being troubled (although post-incident reviews have often shown that there were many warning signs that went undetected).

In this context, numerous federal, state, and local initiatives have sprung up to address concerns about school safety, and most fundamentally, to prevent future school violence.

Federal Legislation and Research

In 1986, Congress passed the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act (SDFSCA), which provides for support of drug and violence prevention programs. This program has funded numerous local initiatives through the United States, including a large number of targeted programs in Kentucky schools (see data within this report). In addition to funding programmatic activity, SDFSCA included an impact evaluation component, leading to a requirement that the

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) conduct studies to determine the frequency, seriousness, and incidence of violence in elementary and secondary schools. The most prominent reports yielded by the federal government's attempts to estimate the extent of school violence are:

- **Indicators of School Crime and Safety (1999)** – Published jointly by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) and the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), this is a synopsis of a wide variety of recent studies conducted by the NCES, BJS, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Four types of studies are emphasized: (1) nonfatal student victimization, based on student reports; (2) incidence of violence and crime at school, based on public school principal/disciplinarian reports; (3) nonfatal teacher victimization at school, based on teacher reports; and, (4) perceptions of the school environment, based on student reports.

- **Violence and Discipline Problems in U.S. Public Schools: 1996-97** – A school violence survey by NCES conducted with a nationally representative sample of 1,234 regular public elementary, middle, and secondary schools in 1997, describing: (1) the incidence of school crime and violence; (2) principal perceptions of the seriousness of discipline issues in their schools; (3) types of disciplinary actions taken; and, (4) security measures taken and violence prevention activities underway at the local level.

- **1999 Annual Report on School Safety** – A joint report by the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Justice designed to summarize the current state of knowledge about school violence and provide guidance and direction to local efforts.

- **Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (1997)** – Published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, this report describes epidemiological data from a comprehensive system to monitor youth behaviors that most influence health. It focuses on significant mortality, morbidity, disability, and social problems during youth.

Data from these and similar studies will be referenced throughout this report.

Kentucky Legislation
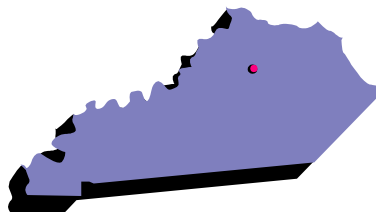
In Kentucky, concerns about school safety were given expression through the passage of House Bill 330 (now Kentucky Revised Statute 158) in 1998. Following the passage of this legislation, KDE melded the requirements of Federal and state reporting mandates, and mandated that school districts report local incidence data regarding both law and school board policy violations, in addition to documenting local prevention and intervention efforts. The Center for School Safety, currently located within the College of Justice and Safety at Eastern Kentucky University, was created to gather and disseminate these data through an initiative called the **Kentucky Safe Schools Data Project**. In addition, the Center funds local school

safety initiatives (during the 1999-2000 school year, 90 such initiatives were funded, serving 126 school districts).

The Kentucky Safe Schools Data Project reflects federal and state guidelines for gathering outcome data and reporting on prevention programs and activities. Data reporting requirements are mandated at the federal level by the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act (34 CFR 299) and the Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994 (20 USC 8921).

Are Our Schools Safe?

Prior to examining Kentucky's data, it is important to place the area of school safety and school violence in context. **While there is much legitimate concern about incidents of school violence, there is also much reason to be encouraged.** Findings from the 1999 federal reports (Annual Report on School Safety and Indicators of School Crime and Safety) are summarized below.

- There is less than one in a million chance of suffering a school-associated violent death.

- Less than 1% of the children nationwide who were murdered or committed suicide were at school (on school property, at a school-sponsored event, on the way to or from school).

- There were less total school-associated violent deaths in the 1997-1998 school year (46) than in 1992 (55), but there has been an increase in multiple victim homicide occurrences (including five such events in 1997-98).

- Most injuries that occur at school are not the result of violence. 90% of children ages 5 through 18 admitted to a pediatric trauma unit or hospital for an injury sustained at school were injured unintentionally through falls, sports injuries, and equipment injuries.

- Most school crime is theft, not serious violent crime. Both theft and serious crime rates are trending downward since a high in 1993, both at school and away from school.

- The overall school crime rate has been declining, from about 155 crimes per 1000 students in 1993 to 102 crimes per 1000 students in 1997.

- Student weapon carrying and physical fighting have declined steadily between 1993 and 1997. These findings are consistent across gender, grade, and ethnic/racial groups.

However, there are some areas of school safety which are not improving, and a few that have continued to increase despite extensive efforts. These are areas that require renewed and additional effort. Some examples from the national reports include:

- While serious violent crimes are declining in schools, for students age 12 through 19 there were still an estimated 202,000 serious violent crimes (rape, sexual assault, robbery, and aggravated assault) in schools during 1997.

- The percent of 12th graders who report that they have been injured by a weapon at school (e.g., knife, gun, club) and the percent who report they had been injured on purpose without a weapon, has remained stable for the past 20 years. These percentages are 5% and 14% respectively.

- Each year from 1993 through 1997, there were approximately 31 violent crimes committed against teachers in public and private schools for every 1000 teachers, and about 53 thefts per 1000 teachers. Teachers in urban schools are more vulnerable to crime at school than suburban and rural teachers.

- About 3% of 12th grade students reported carrying a gun to school at least one day during the prior 4-week period, consistently from 1994 to 1997.

- Higher percentages of Black and Hispanic students reported feeling "very unsafe" at school than did White students.

- From 1989 to 1995, the proportion of students concerned about the presence of street gangs on school property increased from 15% to 28%.

- The proportion of students age 12 through 19 who reported avoiding places at school for their own safety increased between 1989 and 1995, from 5 to 9 percent.

- About one third of all high school students report that someone had offered, sold, or given them an illegal drug on school property.

- While alcohol and marijuana use on school property appeared to remain constant, overall marijuana use among high school students appears to be on the rise.

- During the 1996-97 school year, 16% of all public school principals reported that one or more of a list of common discipline problems were serious

problems in their school (tardiness, absenteeism, classcutting, physical conflicts, robbery or theft, vandalism, alcohol use, drug use or sale of drugs, tobacco, weapons, trespassing, verbal or physical abuse of teachers, racial tensions, gangs).

Both at the national level (and in Kentucky, as will be discussed) <u>schools are generally very safe, and appear to be getting safer</u>. But there remain a number of challenging issues and concerns that schools and communities need to be working on. This perspective is summarized in the box below:

> "…the data shown in this report present a mixed picture of school safety. While overall school crime rates have declined, violence, gangs, and drugs are still evident in some schools. It is hoped that children will be able to go to and come from school and spend time at school without fearing for their safety or the safety of their friends and teachers. The data presented in this report indicate that more work needs to be done."
>
> Indicators of School Crime and Safety (1999)
> U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement and U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs

Nationally, What are Schools Doing in Response to Problems of Crime, Violence, and Discipline?

As school districts across the country have become more sensitized to problems of school violence and discipline, extensive policy and practice changes have occurred. The previously cited school reports provide a global picture of some of these efforts, **many of which are similar to Kentucky's efforts (described later in this report):**

- Most schools report "zero tolerance" policies mandating predetermined consequences or punishments for specific offenses. 94% had zero tolerance for firearms, 91% for weapons other than firearms, 87% for alcohol, 88% for drugs, and 79% for violence and tobacco.

- Most school districts report taking extra security measures in response to school violence. 96% require visitors to sign in, 80% have adopted a closed campus policy, 53% control access to their school building and 24% to the school grounds, and 19% report drug sweeps (generally middle and high schools). Only 4% perform random metal detector checks on students, and only 1% report using metal detectors on a daily basis.

- During 1996-97, about 6% of schools reported having police or security officers on site more than 30 hours per week, and an additional 1% had them 10-29 hours. 12% of schools reported that security officers were made available as needed. 78% of schools had no such arrangement.

- A high percentage of schools (78%) offered formal violence prevention or reduction programs, including 1-day sessions, on-going programming, or both.

- In 1996-97, there were over 5,000 expulsions for possession or use of a firearm in school. During the 1997-98 school year , approximately 3,930 students were expelled for bringing a firearm to school. Unfortunately, about half of these students were not referred for alternative placements and did not receive educational services following their expulsion. In 1996-97, 8,144 students were placed in out-of-school suspensions of 5 or more days for firearm possession.

- 3% of all public schools required students to wear school uniforms during the 1996-97 school year.

1999 Annual Report on School Safety (Federally-funded local initiatives)
www.ed.gov/pubs/AnnSchoolRept99

 "The Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative draws on the best practices of the education, justice, social service, and mental health systems to promote a comprehensive, integrated problem-solving process for use by communities in addressing school violence. This process…includes (1) establishing school-community partnerships; (2) identifying and measuring the problem; (3) setting measureable goals and objectives; (4) identifying appropriate research-based programs and strategies; (5) implementing programs and strategies in an integrated fashion; (6) evaluating the outcomes of programs and strategies; and (7) revisng the plan on the basis of evaluation information."

"The Initiative requires comprehensive, integrated community-wide plans to address at least the following six elements: (1) safe school environment; (2) prevention and early intervention programs that address violence, alcohol, and other drugs; (3) school and community mental health preventive and treatment intervention services; (4) early childhood psychosocial and emotional development programs; (5) educational reform; and (6) safe school policies."

54 grants were awarded to local educational agencies across the country, ranging from $1 to $3 million per year. Kentucky received one of these projects, a collaboration between Jefferson County Public Schools, Seven Counties Services, and the Louisville Police Department. Called Project Shield, it features implementation of a Primary Mental Health Program for early intervention, family and multisystemic therapy, teacher training, and crime prevention through environmental design.

What is the Kentucky Safe Schools Data Project?

1999 was the baseline year of data reporting to the Kentucky Department of Education (and subsequent analysis by the Center for School Safety). This report was based on 1998-99 school year data self-reported by 179 school districts, including the Kentucky School for the Blind, the Kentucky School for the Deaf, and Model Laboratory School in Richmond. Building-level data were provided by 1,437 schools representing a total enrollment of 637,368 students. Three statistical reports were released, providing an analysis of State Totals, Grade-Level Totals (elementary, middle, high school), and Individual School District Totals. Data were organized in four sections: (1) drug and/or violence prevention programs and strategies in Kentucky schools; (2) incidence of law violations; (3) security measures taken; and (4) local board policy violations. In 2000, data were gleaned from 179 school districts comprised of 1424 school buildings, with a total student enrollment of 639,289.

To accomplish data gathering for the first two years of operation, the Kentucky Department of Education collaborated with Research Triangle Institute (RTI) in North Carolina to design an electronic reporting system (partially funded through a federal grant). The objectives of the electronic system were to: (1) assist all school districts in providing data on youth violence and prevention activities; (2) improve the quality and completeness of data reported by schools and districts; (3) develop an integrated reporting system to meet new federal and state reporting requirements; and (4) provide access to data to serve the reporting and evaluation needs at the federal, state, and local levels.

To implement this electronic system, district contact persons receive incident data from individual schools as specified on electronic data-gathering worksheets, organize this material, and then enter the data into a Web-enabled database managed by RTI. Following data cleaning and follow-up, these data are then transmitted to the Center for School Safety for analysis.

Data definitions have remained constant across the two years, and data quality has steadily improved over the two years of initial program operation. This was aided by training and feedback provided to the individual school districts. Considerable effort has gone into specifying and clarifying data variables. For example, detailed definitions of law and school board violations were provided to users. A comprehensive glossary of terminology was provided in the Data Collection Handbook provided to all school district points of contact. It appears the 1999-2000 data are significantly more accurate, particularly in areas of school board policy violations. There remain some areas that require further examination, including: (1) continued clarification that reported law violations pertain only to those specific incidents reported to legal authorities; (2) recognition that consequences of legal violations may be unknown to school officials, and not representative of actual legal outcomes; (3) continued clarification of board policy violation data, in that some categories may overlap and specific incidents may be difficult to categorize; and, (4) recognition that some categories do not just involve

students, in that staff or other individuals may be involved, resulting in a skewing of the disciplinary action data.

In general, it appears that law violation data are more consistently reliable than Board Policy violation data. Confidence in these comparisons is aided by recent efforts to correct "outlier" data from last year's report in a small number of cases. Also, it is important to recognize that throughout the report, data are shown in terms of incidence (the number or frequency of discrete occurrences) and not prevalence (number of persons involved). An exception is victim and offender data, where multiple victims may relate to individual incidents, and offender totals can count the same individual more than once in relation to multiple incidents.

Despite these limitations, the two-year data set provides an exceptionally rich base from which to glean data about the nature and scope of school violence and prevention programming in Kentucky's schools.

How Can This Information Contribute to Safer Schools?

Our hope is that by reviewing and understanding these data, schools and communities will be able to plan and implement concrete local efforts to promote school safety. Thus, our intent is that all reports will be readable, clear, and relevant, with a strong emphasis on graphic presentation of data. **The Safe School Data Project Focus Group (see below) is hereby acknowledged for their role in clarifying what is timely and relevant to schools and communities, and for their helpful suggestions regarding the style, format and content of this report.**

The present report (Report #1) is the first in a series about School Year 1999-2000.

- **Report #1** summarizes state- and regional-level data, provides global estimates of school safety, and some rough estimates of progress in relation to last year's data.

- **Report #2** (to be published within a month of the present report) provides a more refined analysis of Kentucky data, showing how the data vary in relation to grade level, gender, racial and ethnic characteristics, economic disadvantage factors, and some related variables that may be instructive.

- **Report #3** (to be published within a month of Report #2) provides **school district data**, showing how each district fares in regard to violations and prevention efforts.

The purposes of these reports are to: (1) supply educators, parents, students and community members with general descriptive information about school safety,

(2) provide state and local school officials with more detailed information that can inform school improvement efforts and reduce risk to students; and, **(3)** over time, enable judgments to be made about the extent to which schools are becoming more safe environments for learning.

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Law Violations in Kentucky's Schools

This section reports on what Kentucky school officials perceived as potential crimes on school grounds or at school-related functions. Under the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting guidelines, crimes are organized into two categories, Part I (illegal acts against a person or property) and Part II (less serious crimes that may result in arrest).

The Kentucky Safe Schools Data Project has adopted the FBI Uniform Crime Reporting Form to provide a framework for gathering data about the incidence of illegal activity on school grounds or at school-related activities in Kentucky. Whenever an incident occurs that meets these criteria, the school official (typically the principal), is required by Kentucky Revised Statute 158 to report the incident to the proper legal authorities. It is these incidents that are being reported upon by school districts in this section. An additional legal requirement for reporting is imposed by Kentucky Revised Statute 158.444, which mandates reporting of school-based crimes involving aggravated assault, forcible rape, drug abuse violations, sex offenses (other than rape and prostitution), vandalism, and use of firearms or other weapons. Notably, once these crimes have been reported, school officials are not typically informed or knowledgeable about the legal outcome, although there may well be consequences at the school level.

Under the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) system, Part I (or index) crimes are considered particularly serious. They involve an illegal act directed against a person (i.e., criminal homicide, forcible rape, robbery, and aggravated assault) or against property (i.e., arson, burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft). Part II law violations are less serious crimes that may result in arrest and include simple assault, embezzlement, vandalism, sex offenses (other than rape and prostitution), and drunkenness.

More precise definitions of Part I and Part II Crimes are shown in the boxes below:

Definitions of Part I Crimes

Aggravated Assault – An unlawful act by one person upon another for the purpose of inflicting severe or aggravated bodily injury . This type of assault usually is accompanied by the use of a weapon or by means likely to produce death or great bodily harm.

Arson – Any willful or malicious burning or attempt to burn, with or without intent to defraud, a dwelling house, public building, motor vehicle or aircraft, personal property of another.

Burglary – The unlawful entry of a structure to commit a felony or a theft.

Criminal Homicide – The willful (non-negligent) killing of one human being by another.

Forcible Rape – The carnal knowledge of a female forcibly and against her will.

Larceny-Theft – The unlawful taking, carrying, leading, or riding away of property from the possession or constructive possession of another.

Motor Vehicle Theft – The theft or attempted theft of a motor vehicle.

Robbery – The taking or attempting to take anything of value from the care, custody, or control of a person or persons by force or threat of force and/or putting the victim in fear.

Definitions of Part II Crimes

Curfew and Loitering – Based on existence of local curfew or loitering ordinances, where such laws exist.

Disorderly Conduct – Committing a breach of the peace, including affray, unlawful assembly, disturbing the peace, disturbing meetings, disorderly conduct, blasphemy, profanity, obscene language, desecrating the flag, refusing to assist an officer, all attempts to commit any of these.

Driving Under the Influence – Driving or operating any vehicle or common carrier while drunk or under the influence of liquor or narcotics, including motor vehicles, train, streetcar, boat, etc.

Definitions of Part II Crimes (continued)

Drug Abuse Violations – Includes all arrests for violations of state and local laws relating to the unlawful, possession, sale, use, growing, manufacturing, and making of narcotic drugs.

Drunkenness – Includes all offenses of drunkenness or intoxication, with the exception of "driving under the influence".

Embezzlement – Misappropriation or misapplication of money or property entrusted to one's care, custody, or control, to include altering or forging records; making, altering, forging, or counterfeiting bills, notes, drafts, tickets, checks, credit cards; forging wills, deeds, notes, bonds, seals, trademarks; possessing forged or counterfeited instruments; erasures; signing the name of another; using forged labels; possession of counterfeiting apparatus; and/or selling goods with altered, forged, or counterfeited trademarks.

Fraud – Fraudulent conversion and obtaining money or property by false pretenses, including bad checks, confidence games, leaving gas station without paying, and/or unauthorized ATM withdrawal.

Gambling – Charges related to promoting, permitting, or engaging in illegal gambling, including bookmaking, numbers, and lottery.

Liquor Law Violations – Includes illegal manufacture, sale, transporting, furnishing, or possessing intoxicating liquor; maintaining unlawful drinking places; bootlegging; operating a still; furnishing liquor to a minor or intemperate person; using a vehicle for illegal transportation of liquor; and/or drinking on train or public conveyance.

Offenses Against the Family and Children – All charges of non-support and neglect or abuse of family and children, such as desertion, abandonment, or non-support of spouse or child; neglect or abuse of spouse or child; and/or nonpayment of alimony.

Other Assaults (simple) – Assaults and attempted assaults where no weapon was used or which did not result in serious or aggravated injury to the victim, with offense titles such as simple assault, minor assault, assault and battery, injury by culpable negligence, resisting or obstructing an officer, intimidation, coercion, and/or hazing.

Prostitution and Commercialized Vice – Prostitution; keeping a bawdy house, disorderly house, or house of ill fame; and/or pandering, procuring, transporting, or detaining women for immoral purposes

Runaways (persons under 18) – Incidents for protective custody as defined by local statute, to be counted by home jurisdiction.

Sex Offenses – Adultery, fornication, buggery, incest, indecent exposure, indecent liberties, seduction, sodomy or crime against nature, and/or statutory rape.

Stolen Property - Buying, receiving, possessing, including attempts.

Vandalism – The willful or malicious destructions, injury, disfigurement, or defacement of any public or private property, real or personal, without consent of the owner or person having custody or control, by cutting, tearing, breaking, marking, painting, drawing, covering with filth, or any other such means as may be specified by local law. Includes a wide range of malicious behavior directed at property, such as cutting auto tires; drawing obscene pictures on public restroom walls, smashing windows, destroying school records, tipping over gravestones, and defacing library books.

Carrying, Possessing Weapons – Manufacture, sale, possession of deadly weapons; carrying deadly weapons, concealed or openly; using, manufacturing silencers; furnishing deadly weapons to minors, and/or aliens possessing deadly weapons. These are reported by category: (1) handgun; (2) shotgun or rifle; (3) other firearm; and (4) all other weapons.

All other Offenses – To include (but not limited to) blackmail and extortion; criminal anarchism; criminal syndicalism; kidnapping; possession of drug paraphernalia or look-alike drugs.

What is the Incidence of School-Reported Part I Law Violations in Kentucky During 1998-99 and 1999-2000?

Figure 1, below, shows the number of incidents reported (to KDE) for **Type I law violations** in Kentucky's school systems. The precise number of incidents for each year is given at the base of the graph. It is important to keep in mind that these data reflect only what the schools perceive to be law violations, and not necessarily adjudicated episodes. This introduces an element of subjectivity, given that educators are not typically trained in legal definitions or terminology, and are not always aware of what happens to students once they enter the legal system. This may be a source of variability in the data, and they should be interpreted with some caution.

A number of these violations appear to be dropping significantly. The huge drop in aggravated assault may partly be attributable to inaccuracy in reported baseline data.

Although they are rare, reported motor vehicle theft appears to be on the rise.

	Arson	Aggravated assault	Burglary	Homicide	Rape	Larceny-theft	Motor Veh. Theft	Robbery
1998-99	151	875	110	0	1	656	8	60
1999-00	90	183	64	0	0	557	22	26

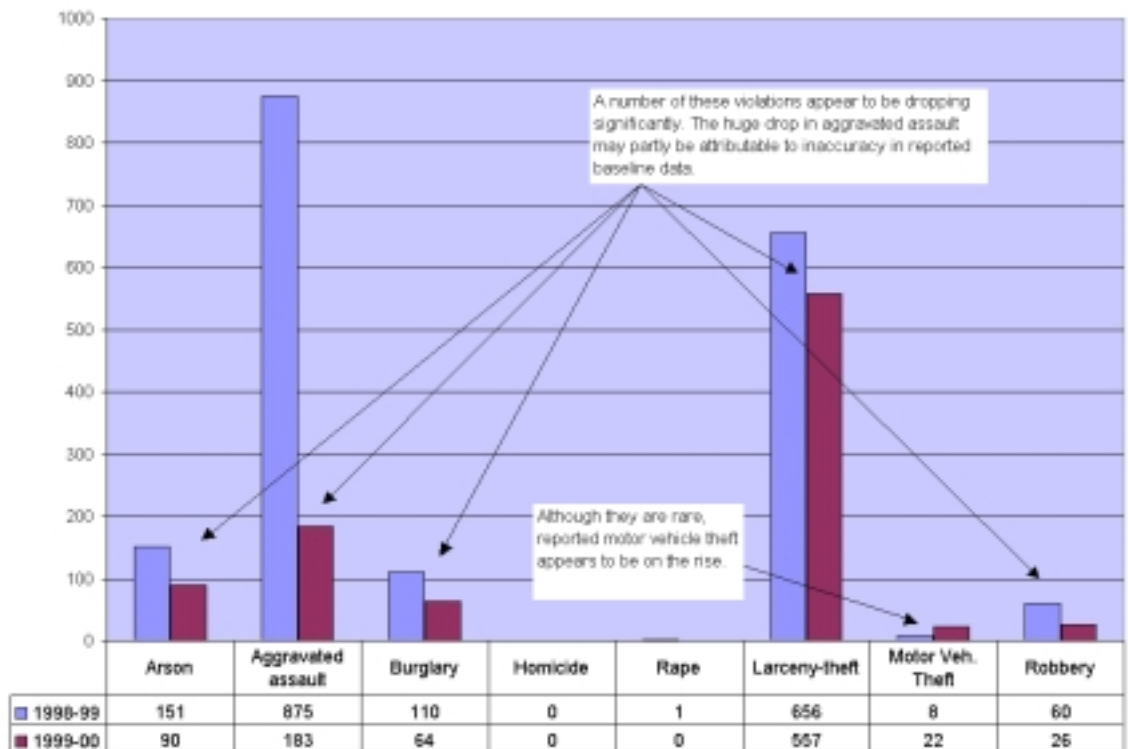**FIGURE 1 : REPORTED PART I LAW VIOLATIONS DURING 1998-99 & 1999-2000**

It can be seen from the above data that substantial <u>decreases</u> occurred for a number of Part I behaviors, most notably aggravated assault. This magnitude of a change is almost certainly in part attributable to inaccurate baseline data (almost all of the decrease occurred in one county). Nonetheless, the overall picture of a decline in reported

incidents is encouraging. The only exception is motor vehicle thefts, which appear to be rising (although the total number of incidents across the state remains quite low).

What is the Incidence of School-Reported Part II Law Violations in Kentucky During 1998-99 and 1999-2000?

Figure 2, shown below, provides school-reported incidents for **higher frequency Type II law violations** in Kentucky's school systems. The actual number of reported incidents for each year is shown at the base of the graph. Again, keep in mind that these data reflect only what the schools perceive to be law violations, not adjudicated episodes.

	Assault (Simple)	Curfew & Loitering	Disorderly Conduct	Drug Abuse	Drunkenness	Liquor	Stolen Property	Vandalism	Weapons - All Other Weapons	All Other Offenses
■ 1998-99	3188	343	2158	2185	252	200	214	631	397	965
■ 1999-00	1877	38	821	2006	213	235	182	453	390	355
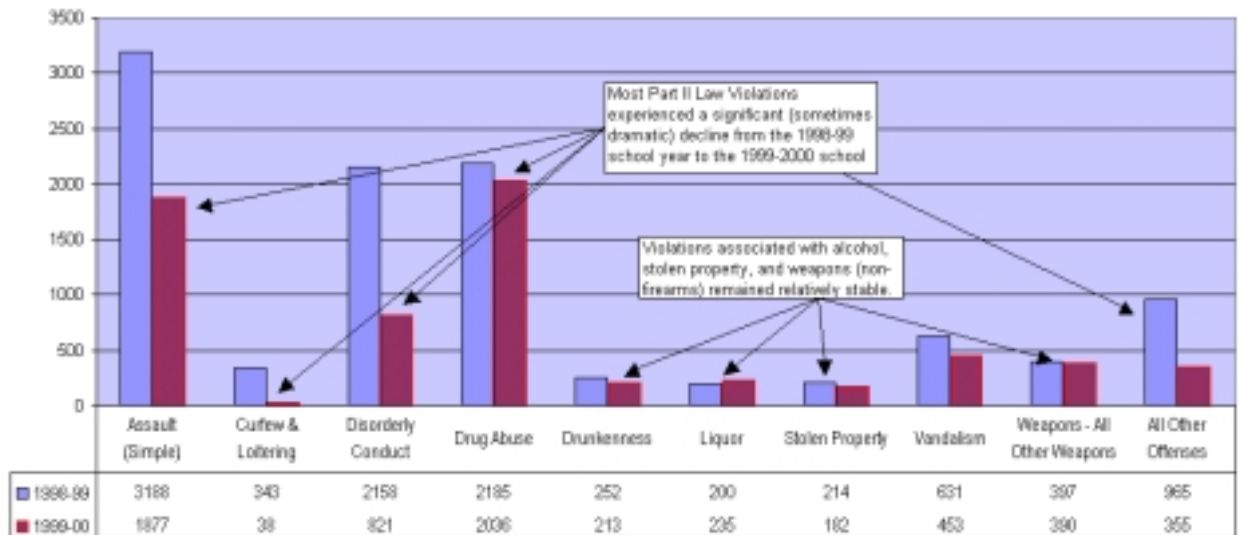
FIGURE 2: REPORTED HIGH FREQUENCY PART II LAW VIOLATIONS DURING 1998-99 & 1999-2000

As can be seen above, for a number of high incidence categories of Part II law violations, there is again a dramatic <u>decrease</u> from 1998-99 to 1999-2000 in the total number of incidents. In part, these decreases may be an artifact of the newness of the reporting system in the first year, which may have lead to inaccurate baseline data reporting. At the same time, these data may reflect significant gains in the handling and prevention of these more serious categories of behavior. **In general, schools appear to be reporting fewer Part II incidents of these types. A more clear sense of the variability of these data may emerge after the third year of data collection.**

It is also notable in the above graph that some categories remained relatively stable, especially those involving **alcohol (drunkenness, liquor), stolen property, and bringing some types of weapons to school (the category of "other" weapons, which does not include firearms). These areas appear to represent persistent problems that are not, to date, yielding to preventive interventions.**

Many Part II behaviors experience significant declines, probably due in part to inaccurate reporting associated with Year 1 data.

Though small in absolute terms, there is an increase in two areas, sex offenses and possession of "other firearms" (see definitions).

	DUI	Embezzlement	Forgery & Counterfeiting	Fraud	Gambling	Offenses Ag. Families/ Children	Prostitution & Commercial- ized Vice	Runaways	Sex Offenses (exc. Rape & Prostitution)	Weapons - Handgun	Weapons - Rifle/Shotgun	Weapons - Other Firearm
1998-99	7	1	126	18	58	116	0	121	105	33	7	2
1999-00	3	0	32	0	25	12	0	53	128	17	6	11

FIGURE 3: REPORTED LOW FREQUENCY PART II LAW VIOLATIONS DURING 1998-99 & 1999-2000

Figure 3 (above) shows school-reported incidence for <u>lower-frequency</u> Type II law violations in Kentucky's school systems. As was seen in the higher frequency Part II law violation data, a number of significant decreases are seen. While some may be anomalies (e.g., forgery and counterfeiting), and others may result from greater familiarity with reporting requirements, it is also plausible that some of these gains are a function of prevention and intervention efforts (e.g., runaway). **While the absolute number of incidents is small, two categories that appear to remain either unchanged or (possibly) on the rise are sex offenses (not including rape and prostitution) and bringing firearms (not rifles or handguns) to school. These may require additional focus, especially if it is determined that they can be localized.**

For the Most Common Criminal Violations, Are There Any Regional Differences in Rates of Occurrence (Relative to Student Population)?

Kentucky's school districts are divided into eight service regions, by the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE). The map shown at **Figure 4** delineates these regions by number.

FIGURE 4: KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (KDOE) SERVICE REGIONS
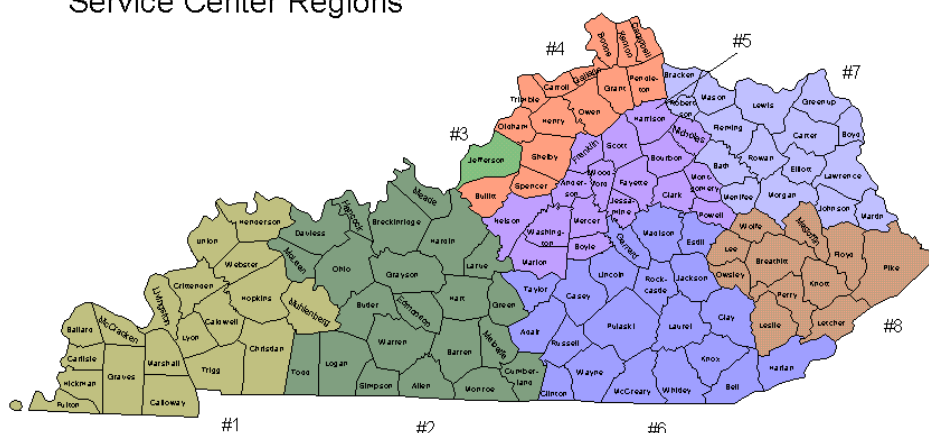
The maps that follow **(Figures 5 through 8)** provide rates for each of the four most common Part I and Part II law violations (aggravated assault, drug violations, simple assault and larceny-theft). Rates are calculated in terms of incidents per 1000 students. **The more darkly shaded the area, the higher the rate.**

Aggravated Assault

Rate per 1,000 students

1999-2000 school year

.44 .11

.87

.17

.37 .04

.11

.14
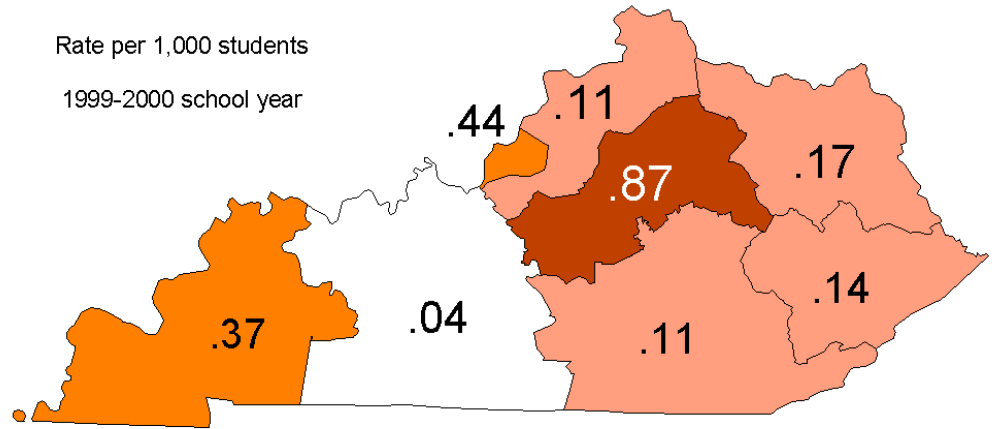
R.E.A.C.H. of Louisville, Inc.

Drug Violations

Rate per 1,000 students

1999-2000 school year

4.2 2.7

4.0

3.5

2.3 2.1

3.4

4.3
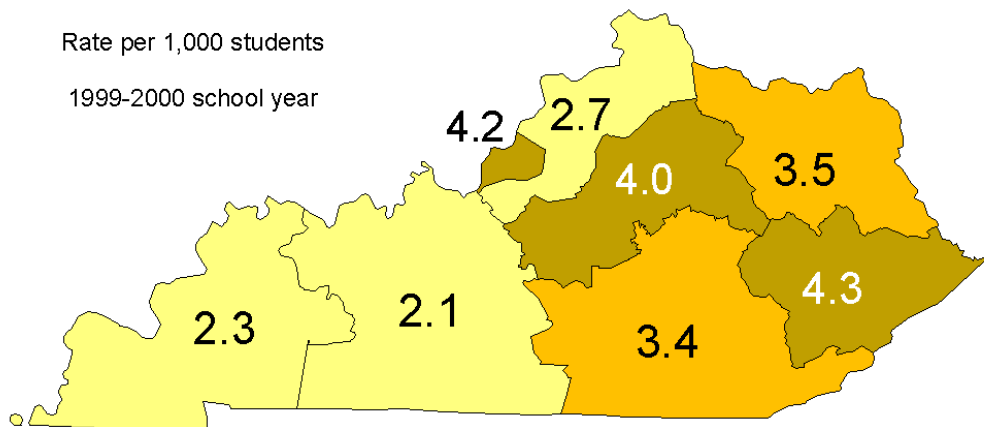
R.E.A.C.H. of Louisville, Inc.

Larceny - Theft

Rate per 1,000 students

1999-2000 school year

.92 .99 1.65 .88

.83 .55 .59 .37
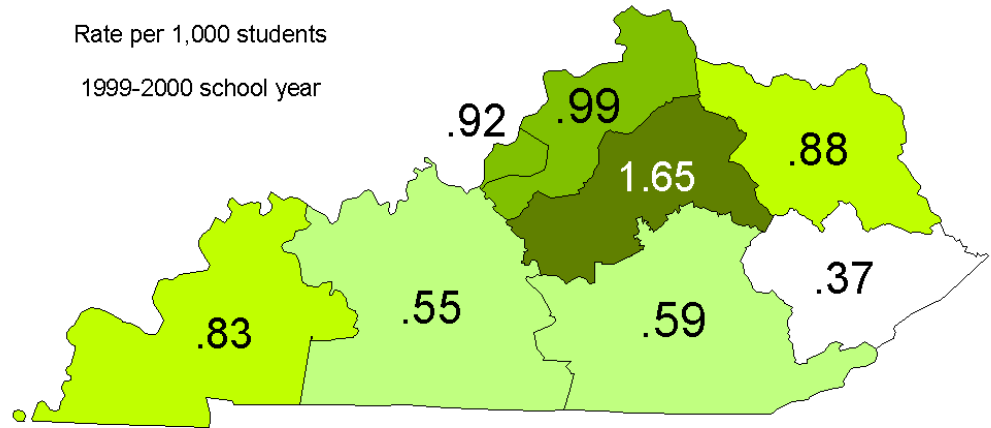
R.E.A.C.H. of Louisville, Inc.

,

Assault (simple)

Rate per 1,000 students

1999-2000 school year

4.9 2.6 3.3 3.7

2.6 1.4 3.1 2.2
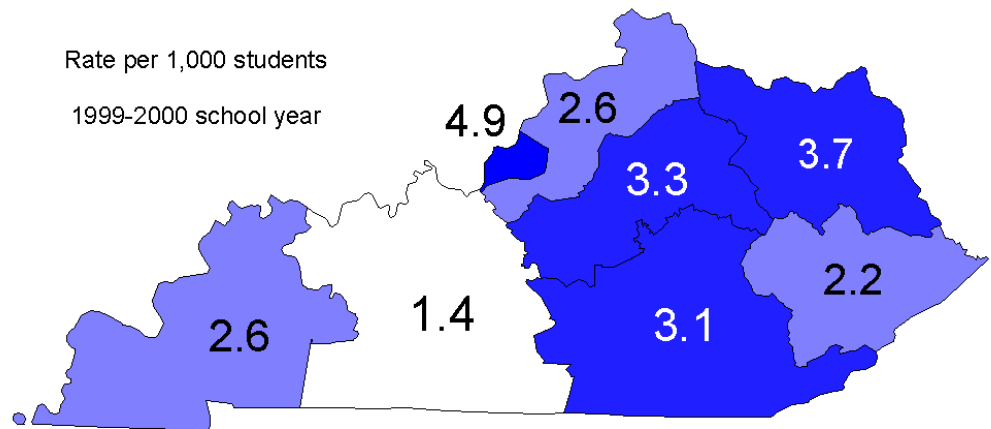
R.E.A.C.H. of Louisville, Inc.

FIGURE 5 THROUGH 8: REPORTED AGGRAVATED ASSAULT, DRUG VIOLATIONS LARCENY-THEFT, AND SIMPLE ASSAULT RATES DURING 1999-2000 YEAR

Reviewing the findings shown in these maps in general terms, some startling regional differences emerge. While it might be hypothesized that urban/suburban areas of the state are most likely to show higher rates of law violations, this is not uniformly the case. For example, in two of the four categories, Jefferson County exhibits relatively high rates of law violations (e.g., drug violations, assault). However, the region with the most uniformly high rates is the central region, which includes Lexington but is mostly rural. In general, it appears that the area of the state south and west of Louisville, extending to the Tennessee line, exhibits the lowest overall rates. In sum, there appears to be considerable variability across behavioral categories in relation to regional location is seen.

It is hypothesized that, to some extent, law violations (and what is reported to law enforcement authorities) may vary as a function of local norms and values, availab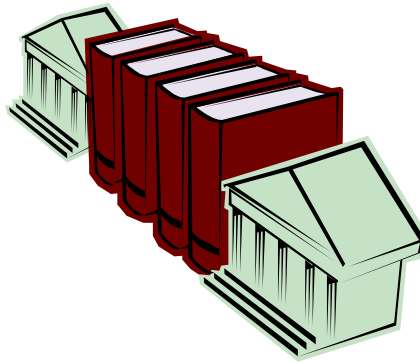ility of resources and remedies, and other community demographic and socio-cultural variables that vary considerably by region.

What Legal Consequences Follow Part I and Part II Law Violations? Are Schools Making Mandatory Reports to Law Enforcement for These Violations?

The figure that follows **(Figure 9)** depicts law-related actions taken by the school (e.g., calling police), as well as actions taken by the legal system (e.g., arrest, filing charges) for Part I and Part II violations. The graph does not include school-based disciplinary actions that are administered due to violation of school board policy.

	Arson	Aggravated assault	Burglary	Motor Veh. Theft	Drug Abuse	Drunken-ness	Liquor	Sex Off. (exc. Rape/ Prost.)	Vandalism	Weapons - All Offenses
■ Call Police	43.3%	54.1%	78.1%	81.8%	74.9%	48.6%	36.0%	23.8%	40.7%	58.3%
■ Arrests	26.7%	18.6%	28.1%	63.6%	13.8%	10.1%	8.5%	3.8%	4.1%	36.6%
□ Charges Filed	32.2%	22.4%	29.7%	45.5%	23.9%	8.9%	14.0%	20.0%	5.0%	31.6%
□ Civil Damages	2.2%	5.5%	9.4%	9.1%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.4%	0.0%
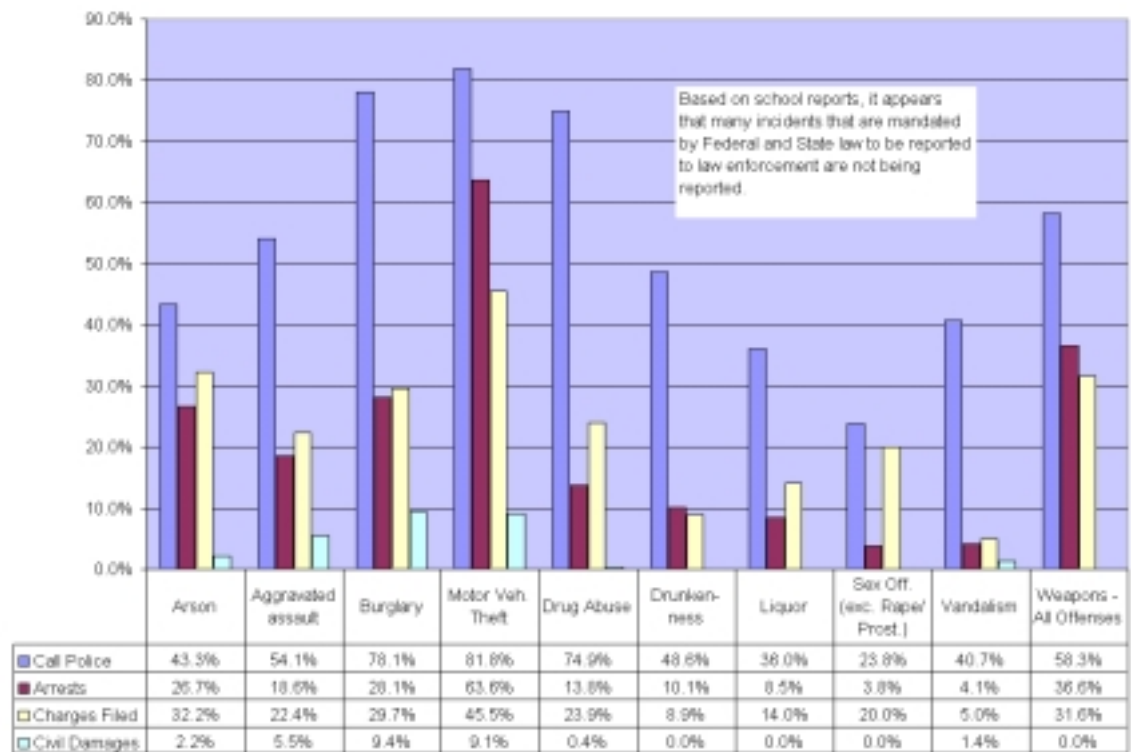
FIGURE 9: REPORTED LEGAL CONSEQUENCES OF PART I VIOLATIONS DURING 1999-2000 YEAR

It is important to recognize that both legal and school-specific consequences may accrue to the same incident. For example, in addition to calling the police, a principal might institute a school suspension for a certain behavior. While it seems likely that school officials will have accurate information about their own actions in this regard, it is probable that actions taken by the legal system are under-reported, given that the school officials may not be fully apprised of what occurs within the legal system subsequent to their report.

In general, it appears that the three Part I behaviors that are most likely to result in calls to law enforcement are aggravated assault, burglary and motor vehicle theft. Some law violations did not occur at all (according to school reports) and therefore do not appear on this chart (e.g., rape, homocide).

For Part II behaviors, it appears that problems associated with possession of weapons, alcohol, and substance abuse were the most likely to lead to legal actions, although at a substantially lower rate than the Part I violations.

What is especially noticeable about these data is the extent to which many law violations are <u>not</u> reported to the police, at least based upon school self-report. If these data are accurate, more training and guidance may need to occur to insure that the reporting requirements of KRS 158 are fulfilled.

From KRS CHAPTER 158

When the principal has a reasonable belief that an act has occurred on school property or at a school-sponsored function involving assault resulting in serious physical injury, a sexual offense, kidnapping, assault involving the use of a weapon, possession of a firearm in violation of the law, possession of a controlled substance in violation of the law, or damage to the property, the principal shall immediately report the act to the appropriate local law enforcement agency. For purposes of this section, "school property" means any public school building, bus, public school campus, grounds, recreational area, or athletic field, in the charge of the principal.

KRS 158.155 (4)
A person who is an administrator, teacher, or other employee of a public or private
school shall promptly make a report to the local police department, sheriff, or
Kentucky State Police, by telephone or otherwise, if:
(a) The person knows or has reasonable cause to believe that conduct has
occurred which constitutes:
1. A misdemeanor or violation offense under the laws of this
Commonwealth and relates to:
a. Carrying, possession, or use of a deadly weapon; or
b. Use, possession, or sale of controlled substances; or
2. Any felony offense under the laws of this Commonwealth; and
(b) The conduct occurred on the school premises or within one thousand (1,000)
feet of school premises, on a school bus, or at a school-sponsored or
sanctioned event.

What School Disciplinary Actions (Suspensions, Expulsions, Alternative Placement) Occurred as a Consequence of Part I and Part II Law Violations?

The graphs that follow (**Figures 10 & 11**) summarize global school disciplinary consequences associated with Part I and Part II law violations for the two years of data gathering. It can be seen that there have been substantial decreases in the number of school disciplinary actions across the state, according to the self-report of the districts. For most categories, these decreases range from 30% to 50%. It is not clear whether these changes reflect true change, or are attributable to inaccurate baseline reporting or some other form of measurement error.

Large and dramatic decreases are seen in school disciplinary actions in three of four categories, possibly due to unstable or unreliable baseline data.

	Out of School Suspensions	Expulsions with Services	Expulsions without Services	Alternative Placements
1998-1999	1484	104	14	242
1999-2000	669	24	17	109
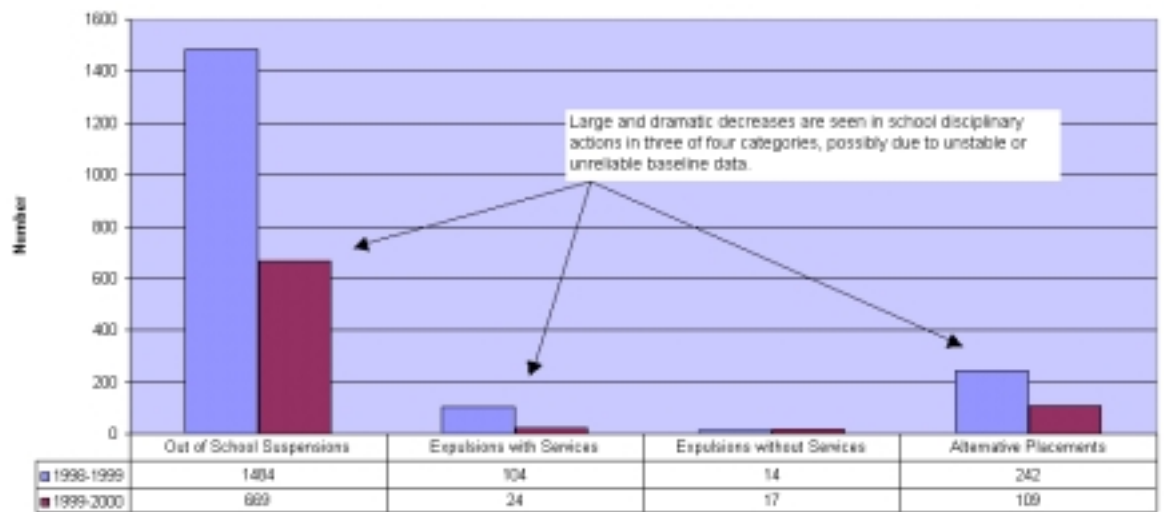
FIGURE 10: COMPARISON OF REPORTED PART I DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS BETWEEN 1998-1999 AND 1999-2000 SCHOOL YEARS

There have been substantial decreases in reported school consequences for Part II violations, in the range of 30-50%. These may in part be due to unstable or unreliable baseline numbers.

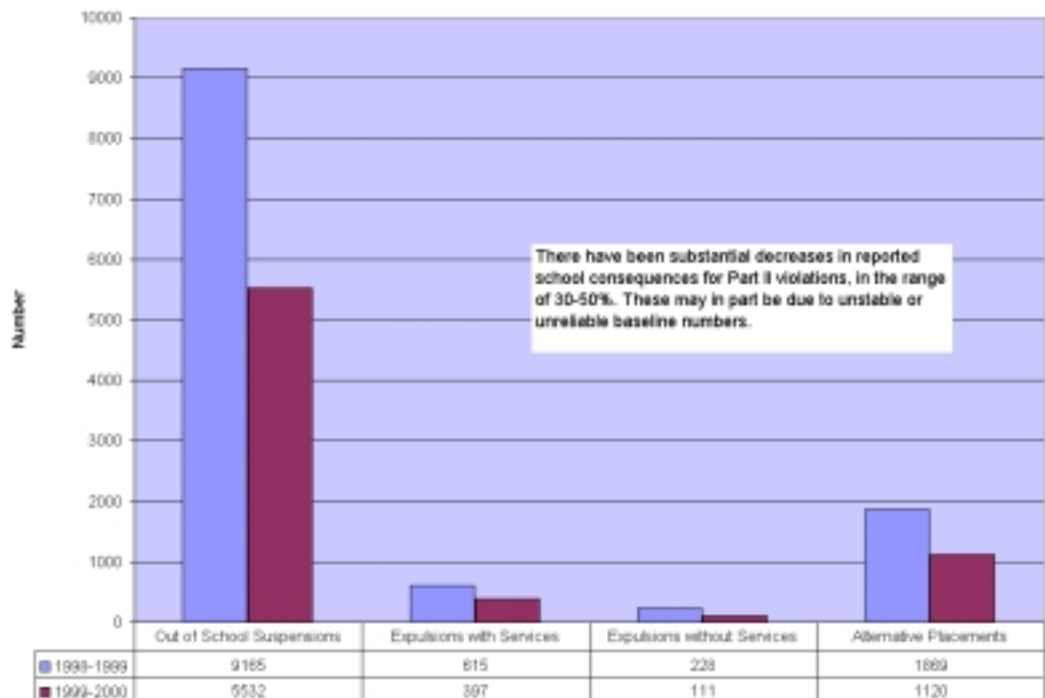|	Out of School Suspensions	Expulsions with Services	Expulsions without Services	Alternative Placements
1998-1999	9165	615	228	1869
1999-2000	5532	397	111	1120

FIGURE 11: COMPARISON OF REPORTED PART II DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS BETWEEN 1998-1999 AND 1999-2000 SCHOOL YEARS

Incidents Involving Weapons, Including Firearms

The graph below (**Figure 12**) shows comparative weapons-related incidents in more detail. **Handgun incidents appear to have dropped, but incidents involving other firearms appear to be on the rise.** It should be noted that the absolute number of such incidents is relatively low, rendering comparisons across years to ascertain trends problematic.

While incidents involving handguns have dropped significantly, "other firearms" have increased. Rifle/shotgun incidents and all other weapon incidents have remained stable. It should be noted that such low incidence data are subject to random variation, and may not indicate a trend.

	Handgun	Rifle or shotgun	Other Firearm	All Other Weapons
1998-1999	33	7	2	397
1999-2000	17	6	11	390

FIGURE 12: INCIDENTS INVOLVING FIREARMS DURING 1998-1999 AND 1999-2000

The total number of school expulsions for firearms is down by about two-thirds.

Reported Expulsions for Weapons Incidents

1998-1999:   **37**

1999-2000:   **12**

Of some concern in light of the above data is the discrepancy between the number of firearms-related incidents and the number of reported school expulsions for weapons incidents. The **Gun-Free Schools Act**, a federal mandate, requires that schools expel students who have brought weapons to school. More information about this requirement is shown below.

GUN-FREE SCHOOLS ACT

The Gun-Free Schools Act requires that each State receiving Federal funds under the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) must have in effect, by October 20, 1995, a State law **requiring** local educational agencies to expel from school for a period of not less than one year a student who is determined to have brought a weapon to school. Each State's law must allow the chief administering officer of the local educational agency to modify the expulsion on a case-by-case basis.

The local educational agency shall, (1) implement a policy requiring referral to the criminal justice or juvenile delinquency system for any student who brings a weapon to school, (2) include in its application for ESEA funds the assurance and other information required by the Gun-Free Schools Act.

The term weapon is defined as:

- Any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by action of an explosive;
- The frame or receiver of any weapon described above
- Any firearm muffler or silencer
- Any destructive device, which includes:
  - (1) Any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas,
  - (2) Grenade,
  - (3) rocket, having a propellant charge or more than four ounces,
  - (4) missle having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce,
  - (5) mine, or
  - (6) similar device

- Any weapon which will, or which may be readily converted to, expel a projectile by the action of an explosive or other propellant, and which has a barrel with a bore of more than one-half inch in diameter.
- Any combination or parts either designed or intended for use in converting any device described in the two immediately preceding examples, and from which a destructive device may be readily assembled.

School-Reported Part I and Part II Law Violations: A Summary

- Comparison between school years 1998-1999 and 1999-2000 appears to demonstrate large overall decreases in school-reported Part I and Part II law violations. Some of these decreases, such as simple assault and disorderly conduct, may be anomalies or artifacts of refinements in data reporting.

- Despite the general decline in Part I and II law violations, there appear to be a small number of areas which are resistant to change or increasing. These include violations associated with alcohol use, buying or receiving stolen property, sex offenses (not including rape or prostitution), and possession of non-firearm weapons. These may be areas for further effort, especially if they can be localized.

- For variables where there are dramatic differences over time, interpretation may be enhanced by reference to another year of data, in order to obtain a more stable baseline.

- When the four most frequently occurring Part I and Part II law violations are examined from a regional perspective, little consistency is seen in terms of urban-suburban-rural location. While Jefferson County has high rates in three areas, it does not in a fourth, and there is considerable regional variability across the categories measured. Presumably, other factors such as demographics, culture, values, legal system, and service availability account for these differences. Further exploration of these data on a county-wide basis (Report #3) may facilitate further description and analysis.

- It is difficult to accurately interpret data on the legal consequences of Part I and Part II violations, since school officials may not be privy to subsequent events within the legal system. However, data on the percent of incidents that are reported to law enforcement by school officials raise concern about compliance with reporting mandates.

- In addition to legal consequences for Part I and II violations, schools administer discipline for the same incidents, ranging from suspension or alternative placement to expulsion (with or without educational services). These data show dramatic declines in the number of school-reported suspensions, expulsions, and alternative placements.

- While incidents involving handguns have dropped significantly, incidents involving "other firearms" have increased (although they remain rare). Rifle/shotgun incidents and all other weapon incidents have remained stable. Given the potential for destructive consequences, such incidents remain a concern and target for intervention. The overall number of expulsions for possession of a weapon at school has dropped from 37 to 12.

School Board Policy Violations & Victim/Offender Data for Kentucky's Schools

This section reports on school board policy violations that occur on school grounds or at school-related activities, as reported to the Kentucky Department of Education. These include student violations of school and district policies that are not law violations and which result in disciplinary actions, including suspension, alternative placement, corporal punishment, or expulsion (with or without educational services). Data on victims and offenders of law and board policy violations are also presented.

Each local school board in Kentucky is empowered and required by Kentucky Administrative Regulation (see inset on next page) to establish a local discipline policy, setting out standards and expectations for behavior and consequences (disciplinary actions) for misconduct. Thus, the Kentucky Safe Schools Data Project gathers information about board policy infractions that do not rise to the level of law violations, but nonetheless require specific disciplinary action. In contrast with the FBI Uniform Code that defines each of the law violations described in Chapter 2, there is variability from district to district in terms of how each behavior is defined. Therefore, in order to impose some structure on this portion of the reporting system, nine general (and relatively discrete) behavioral categories of school behavior infractions were selected. While not inclusive of all disciplinary problems that occur in schools, consensus was arrived at that these were of the greatest concern.

The following student violations are included in the Kentucky Safe Schools Data Project:

- Dangerous instruments (carrying or use)
- Defiance of authority
- Disturbing class
- Failure to attend detention
- Fighting
- Inappropriate sexual behavior
- Profanity or vulgarity
- Threat/intimidation
- Tobacco violations (smoking & chew)

Notably, in order to be included in the report, it is required that each incident be associated with at least one of five available disciplinary actions: (1) out-of-school suspension; (2) expulsion with educational services (some form of educational service is continued, such as home instruction); (3) expulsion without educational services; (4) placement in an alternative education program; and/or (5) corporal punishment. **Disciplinary infractions that do not result in one of the above consequences are not to be included in the reporting done by individual school buildings**. For example, if a child receives an in-school suspension or lesser form of punishment for one or more of the above behaviors, that incident would not be included in the count. This distinction may not have been

> **KRS 158.148 Student discipline guidelines – Local code of acceptable behavior and discipline**
>
> Section (4)
>
> Each local board of education shall be responsible for formulating a code of acceptable behavior and discipline to apply to the students in each school operated by the board.
> (a) The superintendent, or designee, shall be responsible for overall implementation and supervision, and each school principal shall be responsible for administration and implementation within each school. Each school council shall select and implement the appropriate discipline and classroom management techniques necessary to carry out the code. The board shall establish a process for a two-way communication system for teachers and other employees to notify a principal, supervisor, or other administrator of an existing emergency.
> (b) The code shall contain the type of behavior expected from each student, the consequences of failure to obey the standards, and the importance of the standards to the maintenance of a safe learning environment where orderly learning is possible and encouraged.
> (c) The principal of each school shall apply the code of behavior and discipline uniformly and fairly to each student at the school without partiality or discrimination.
> (d) A copy of the code of behavior and discipline adopted by the board of education shall be posted at each school. Guidance counselors shall be provided copies for discussion with students. The code shall be referenced in all school handbooks. All school employees and parents shall be provided copies of the code.

as clear to building-level reporters in the first year of the project, but appears to have become more reliable for the present year.

Interpretation of school board policy violation data should therefore proceed somewhat more cautiously, given that there may be considerable variability across

school districts in terms of tolerance for certain types or categories of behavior. Additionally, not all school districts are likely to be consistent in their application of consequences. **In effect, this section is less about describing the rates of occurrence of clear and well-defined behavior, and more about the consequences associated with the occurrence of a number of general classes of behavior.**

How often do students engage in school board violations that result in discipline, such as suspension, expulsion, alternative placement, or corporal punishment?

Figure 13, shown below, provides reported incidents for t**otal school board policy violations** (each must have resulted in one of the specific consequences) across Kentucky's schools in 1998-1999 and 1999-2000. The actual number of reported incidents for each year is shown at the base of the graph.

	Dangerous instruments	Defiance of authority	Disturbing class	Failure to attend detention	Fighting	Inappropriate sexual behavior	Profanity or vulgarity	Threats or intimidation	Tobacco violations
1998-1999	1224	56490	61713	21233	25139	1909	19150	12566	14861
1999-2000	840	23378	12651	8144	15475	1646	5649	6750	6339

Dramatic decreases are seen in virtually all categories, leading to concern about the accuracy and representativeness of reported baseline data.
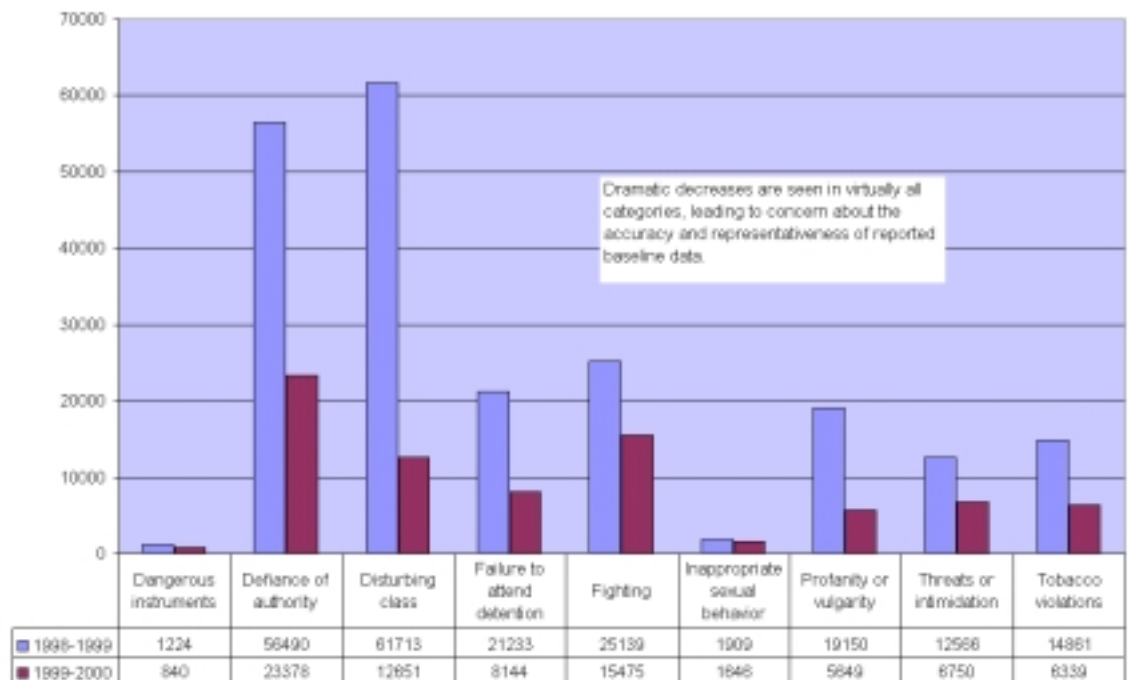
FIGURE 13 : REPORTED SCHOOL BOARD POLICY VIOLATIONS DURING 1998-99 & 1999-2000

In every behavioral category shown on the above chart, there is a dramatic reduction in the number of reported incidents. Some of these reductions are <u>very</u> large, such as the number of class disturbance incidents, from 61,613 in 1998-1999 to 12, 651 in 1999-2000. Almost certainly, this is partly a function of greater accuracy in data reporting. For example, school officials may not have been clear in Year 1 that the criterion for inclusion of an incident was whether it resulted in one of the five disciplinary consequences specified. It seems improbable that the incidence of such behavior could change so dramatically, even with systematic focus and intervention. **Comparisons between Year 2 and Year 3 data may be more reliable. Despite these concerns, it may be that there have been significant reductions in school board violations as a consequence of prevention and intervention efforts.**

Figure 14, below, reports on the **total number of school buildings** within which school-reported board policy violations occurred.

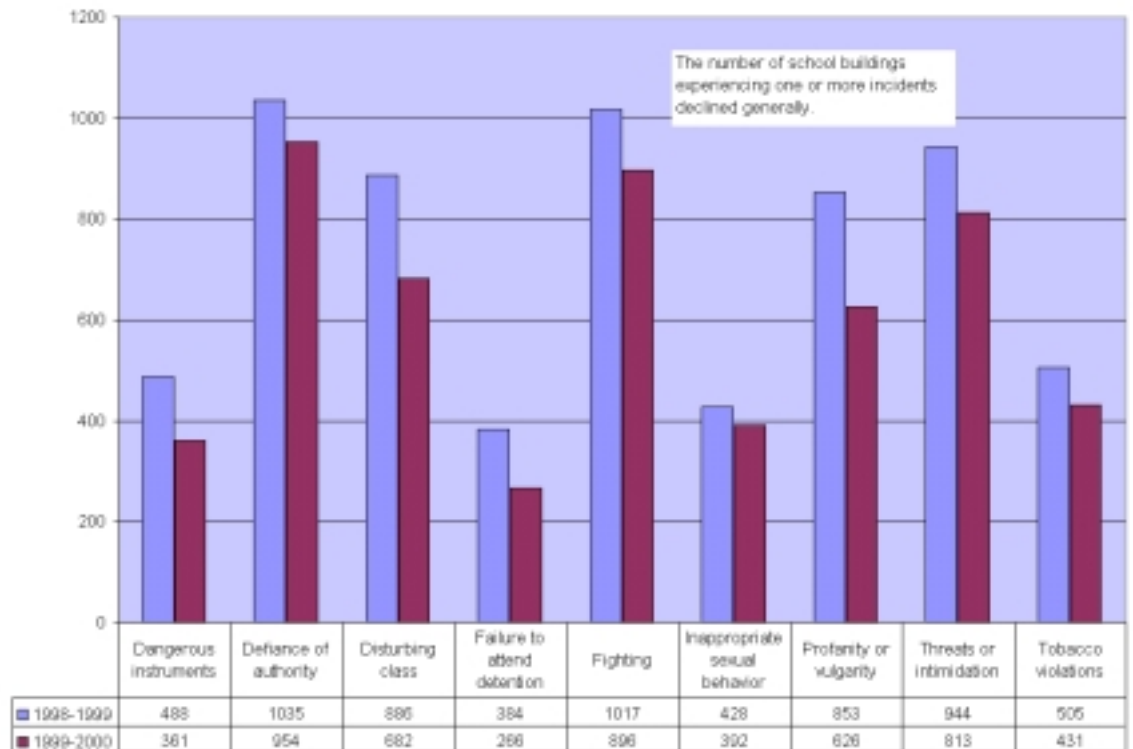|	Dangerous instruments	Defiance of authority	Disturbing class	Failure to attend detention	Fighting	Inappropriate sexual behavior	Profanity or vulgarity	Threats or intimidation	Tobacco violations
1998-1999	488	1035	886	384	1017	428	853	944	505
1999-2000	361	954	682	266	896	392	626	813	431

FIGURE 14: NUMBER OF SCHOOL BUILDINGS REPORTING BOARD POLICY VIOLATIONS DURING 1998-99 & 1999-2000 SCHOOL YEARS (RESULTING IN SPECIFIC CONSEQUENCES)

The categories of behavior that were common to most school buildings were defiance of authority, disturbing class, fighting, profanity/vulgarity, and threats/intimidation.

Less widely distributed categories of behavior seem probably more likely to be more common to secondary-level schools (see Report #2).

Figure 15 provides data on school-reported judgments regarding the extent to which board policy infractions were gang-related. For the purpose of this report, gang-related incidents were defined as follows:

> **The incident is gang-related if it is gang motivated, if gang membership caused the incident or was a contributing factor to actions that happened during the incident. For example, an incident of vandalism or robbery might be a part of an initiation into a gang or a fight might be caused by gang rivalry. Report an incident as gang-related only if you are sure that gang membership contributed to the incident. A gang is a somewhat organized group of some duration, sometimes characterized by turf concerns, symbols, special dress, and colors. The group is recognized as a gang by its members and others.**
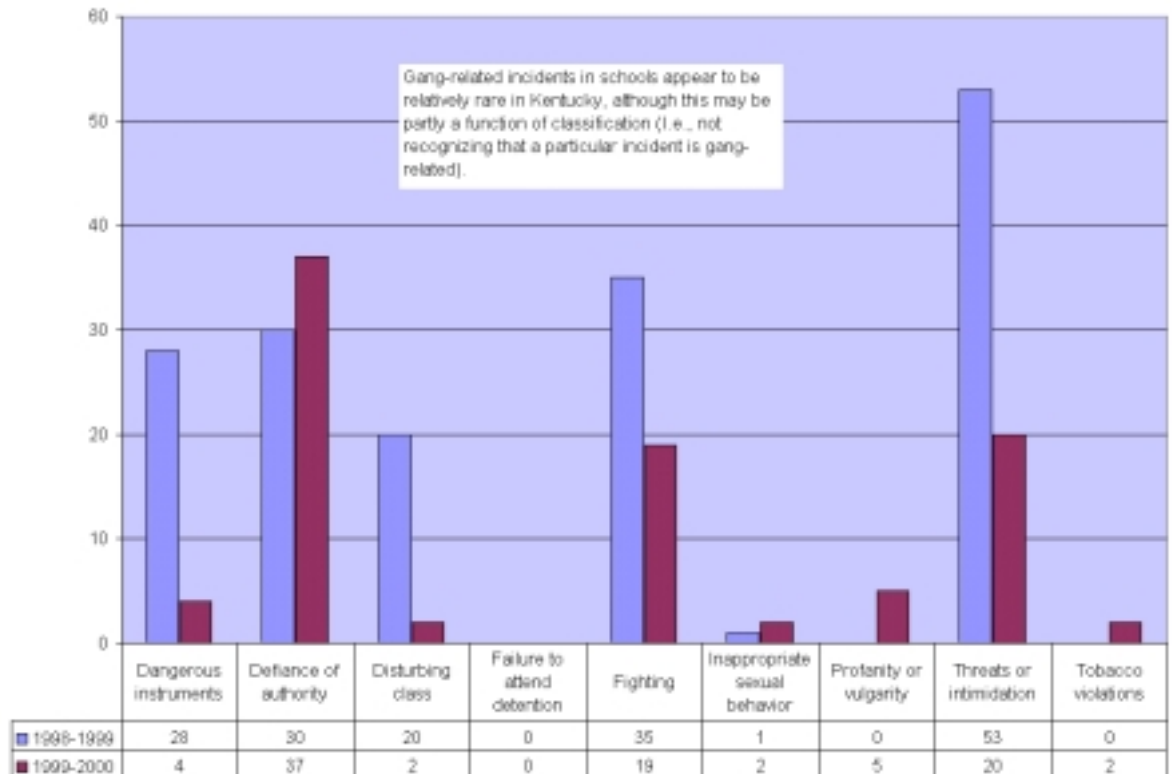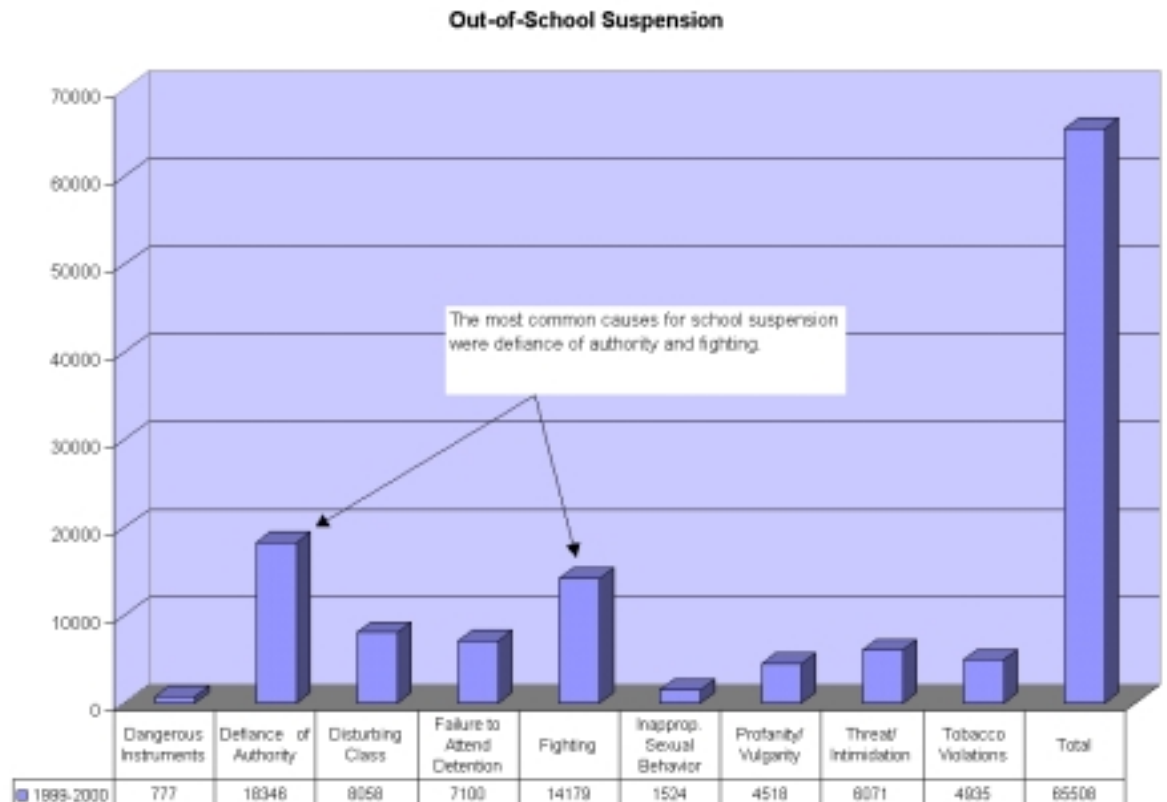

	Dangerous instruments	Defiance of authority	Disturbing class	Failure to attend detention	Fighting	Inappropriate sexual behavior	Profanity or vulgarity	Threats or intimidation	Tobacco violations
1998-1999	28	30	20	0	35	1	0	53	0
1999-2000	4	37	2	0	19	2	5	20	2

Gang-related incidents in schools appear to be relatively rare in Kentucky, although this may be partly a function of classification (i.e., not recognizing that a particular incident is gang-related).

FIGURE 15: NUMBER OF SCHOOL BUILDING BOARD POLICY VIOLATIONS THAT APPEARED GANG-RELATED DURING 1998-99 & 1999-2000
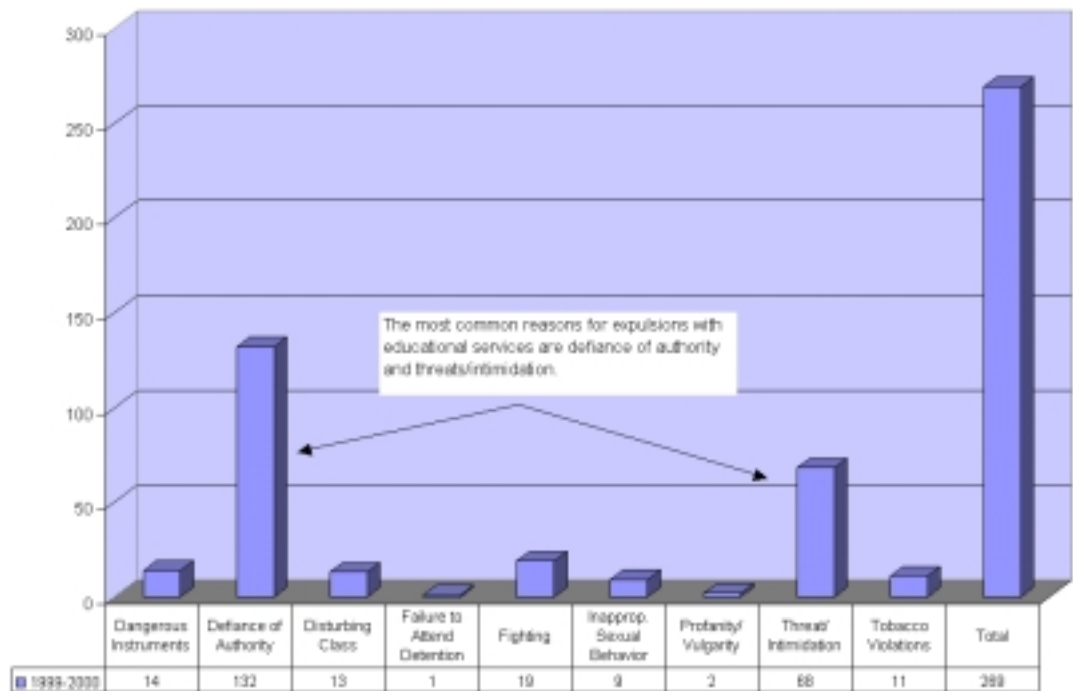
What School Disciplinary Actions Occurred as a Consequence of School Board Policy Violations?

The Kentucky Safe Schools Data Project gathers information on five potential outcomes of school board violations: out-of-school suspension, expulsion with educational services, expulsion without educational services, alternative placement, and corporal punishment. For school year 1999-2000, each of these outcomes is portrayed below in relation to the infractions that provided the basis for its administration.
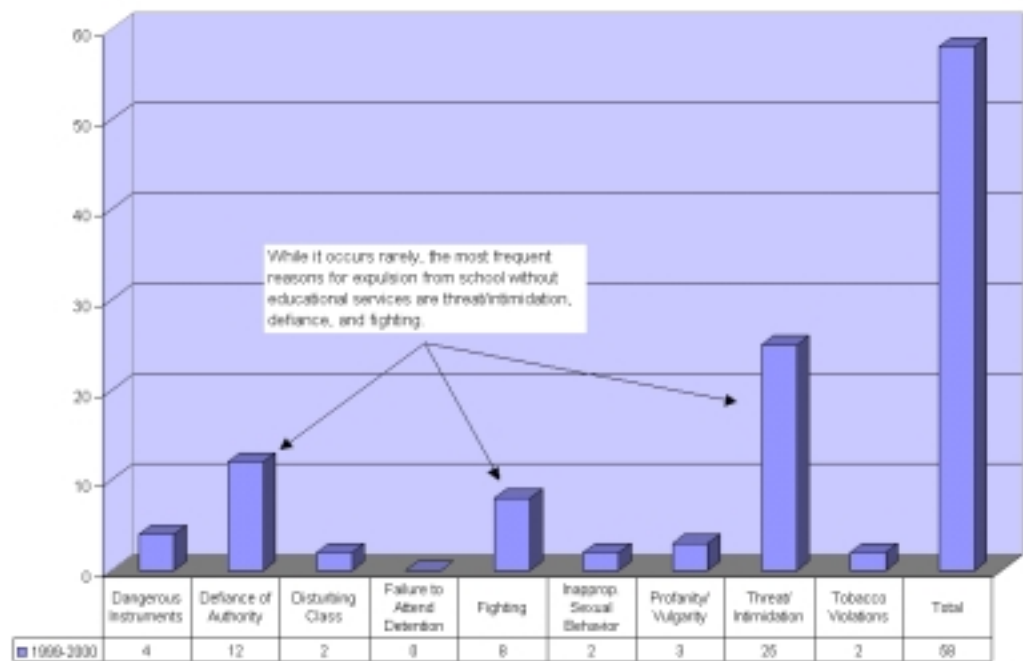
FIGURE 16-20 (BELOW): NUMBER OF SCHOOL-ADMINISTERED CONSEQUENCES FOR BOARD POLICY VIOLATIONS DURING 1999-2000

Out-of-School Suspension

The most common causes for school suspension were defiance of authority and fighting.

	Dangerous Instruments	Defiance of Authority	Disturbing Class	Failure to Attend Detention	Fighting	Inapprop. Sexual Behavior	Profanity/ Vulgarity	Threat/ Intimidation	Tobacco Violations	Total
1999-2000	777	18346	8058	7100	14179	1524	4518	6071	4935	65508

Expulsion with Services

The most common reasons for expulsions with educational services are defiance of authority and threats/intimidation.

	Dangerous Instruments	Defiance of Authority	Disturbing Class	Failure to Attend Detention	Fighting	Inapprop. Sexual Behavior	Profanity/ Vulgarity	Threat/ Intimidation	Tobacco Violations	Total
1999-2000	14	132	13	1	19	9	2	68	11	269

Expulsion without Services

While it occurs rarely, the most frequent reasons for expulsion from school without educational services are threat/intimidation, defiance, and fighting.

	Dangerous Instruments	Defiance of Authority	Disturbing Class	Failure to Attend Detention	Fighting	Inapprop. Sexual Behavior	Profanity/ Vulgarity	Threat/ Intimidation	Tobacco Violations	Total
1999-2000	4	12	2	0	8	2	3	25	2	58

Alternative Placements

Reasons for placing students in alternative settings are more widely distributed among the behavioral categories.

	Dangerous Instruments	Defiance of Authority	Disturbing Class	Failure to Attend Detention	Fighting	Inapprop. Sexual Behavior	Profanity/ Vulgarity	Threat/ Intimidation	Tobacco Violations	Total
1999-2000	98	4222	3594	1315	1575	103	1183	794	1408	14284

Corporal Punishment

Corporal punishment is most typically administered for defiance, disturbing class, and (to a lesser extent) fighting.

	Dangerous Instruments	Defiance of Authority	Disturbing Class	Failure to Attend Detention	Fighting	Inapprop. Sexual Behavior	Profanity/ Vulgarity	Threat/ Intimidation	Tobacco Violations	Total
1999-2000	11	1994	1636	350	660	58	317	214	218	5328

It appears, from a cursory review of the above data, that defiance of authority, fighting, and threats/intimidation are the behaviors that result in the most severe forms of school discipline. Suspension, alternative placement, and corporal punishment are the most frequent forms of school discipline, given these categories.

Following is a summary of the total number of school disciplinary consequences across the two years of data reporting. Overall, expulsion and alternative placement appear to be declining, while suspension and corporal punishment appear to be on the rise.

	Out of School Suspensions	Expulsions with Services	Expulsions without Services	Alternative Placements	Corporal Punishment
1998-1999	58682	2745	75	17359	4323
1999-2000	65508	269	58	14204	5328
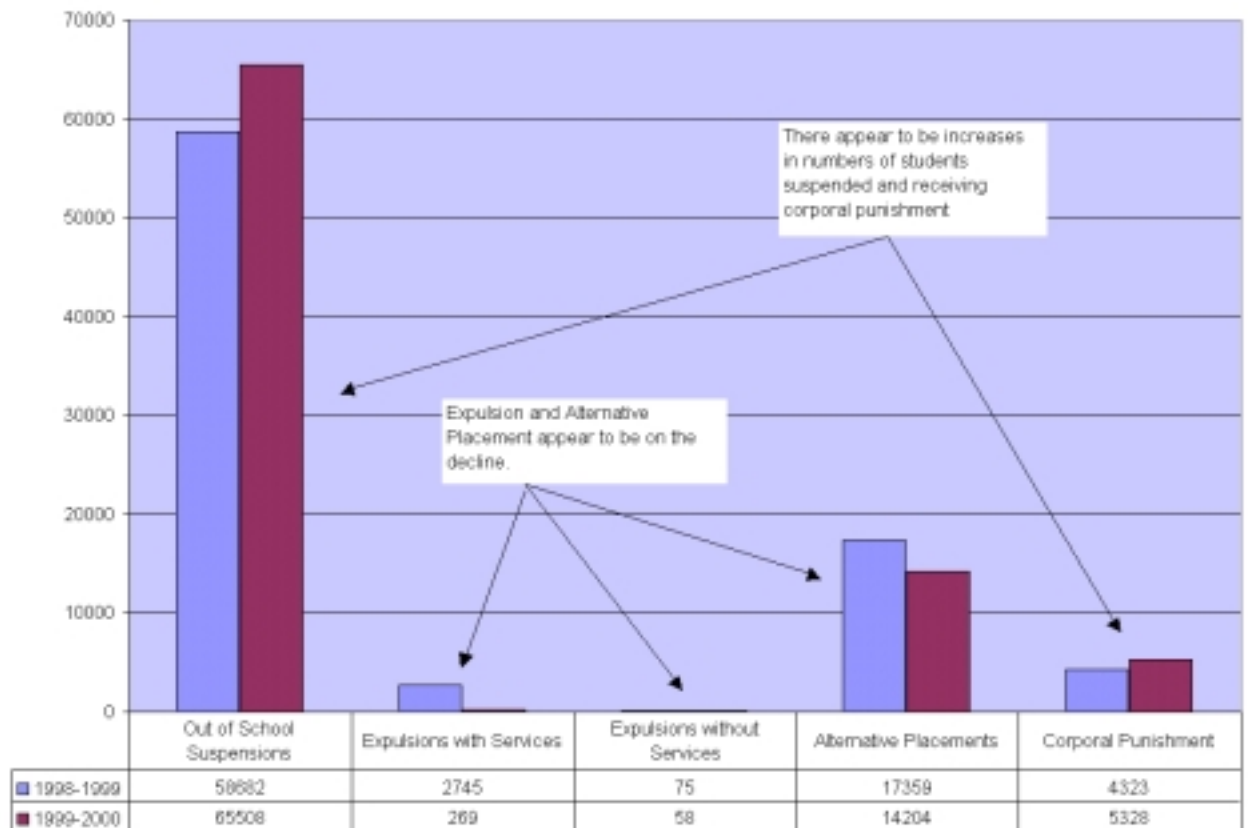
FIGURE 21: COMPARISON OF SCHOOL DISCIPLINARY CONSEQUENCESS FOR BOARD POLICY VIOLATIONS ACROSS 1998-1999 AND 1999-2000

Are there Any Regional Differences in the Incidence of School Board Violations in Kentucky (Relative to School Population)?

The maps that follow provide regional occurrence rates for the four most frequently occurring school board policy violations. The rates shown are calculated to provide a rate per 1000 student, in order to compare across regions.

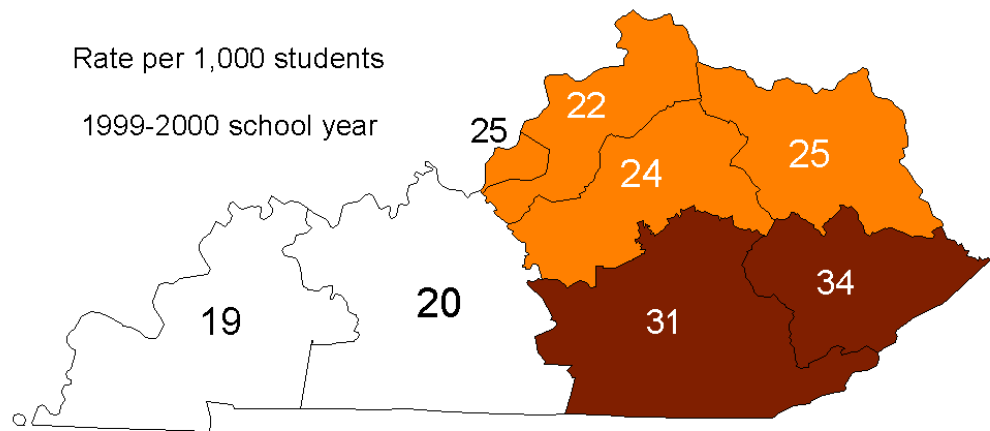**FIGURES 22 THROUGH 25 (BELOW): RATE OF OCCURRRENCE OF FOUR BOARD POLICY VIOLATIONS ACROSS EIGHT REGIONS**

Defiance of Authority

Rate per 1,000 students

1999-2000 school year

20 27

46 41

36 29 57 45
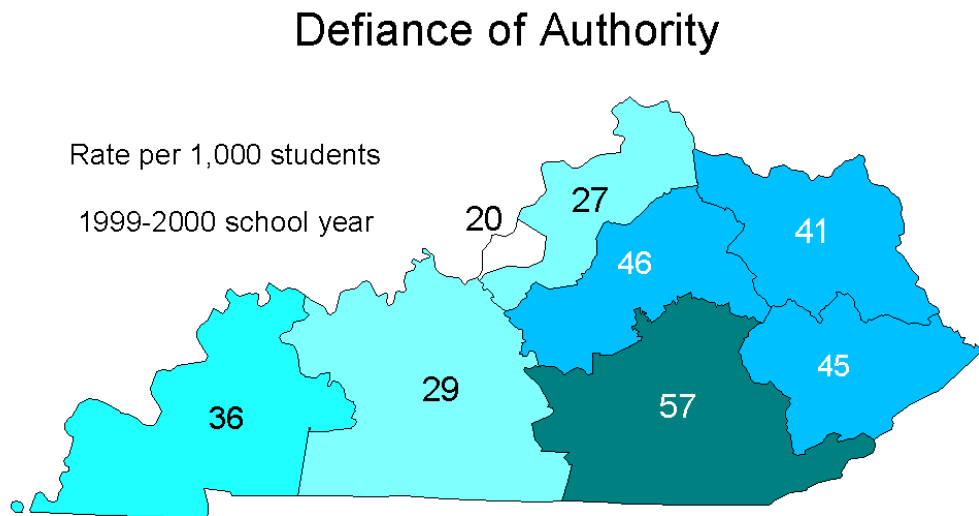
R.E.A.C.H. of Louisville, Inc.

Disturbing Class

Rate per 1,000 students

1999-2000 school year

11

11

11

30

14

12

28

31

42
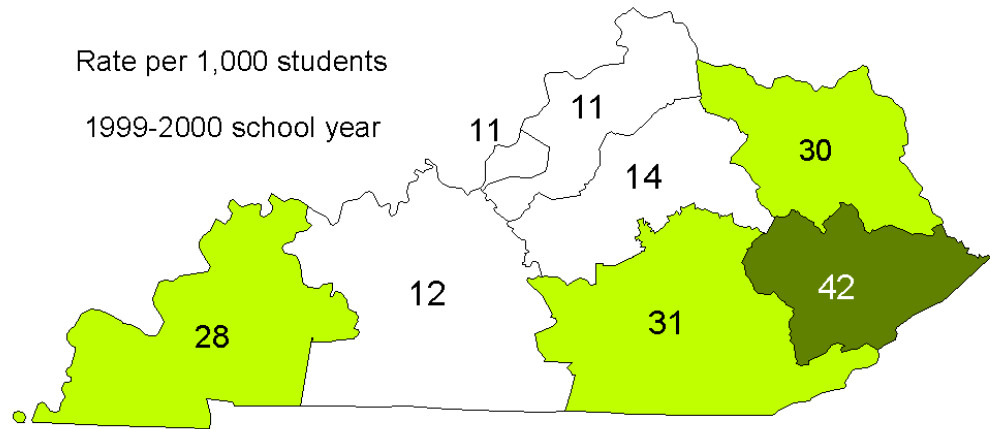
R.E.A.C.H. of Louisville, Inc.

Fighting

Rate per 1,000 students

1999-2000 school year

25

22

24

25

19

20

31

34

R.E.A.C.H. of Louisville, Inc.

Threat/Intimidation

Rate per 1,000 students

1999-2000 school year

21.0

7.9

8.3

10.5

8.4

9.6

8.3

8.9
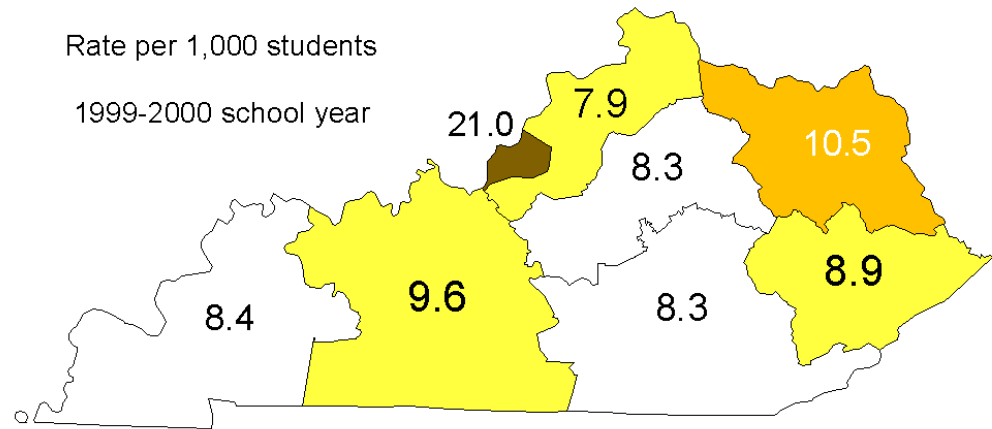
R.E.A.C.H. of Louisville, Inc.

Similar to regional maps pertaining to law violations, board policy violation maps show intriguing differences across regions. Southeastern Kentucky appears to emerge as having the highest overall rates of board violations. In contrast, Jefferson County has among the lowest in classroom disturbance and defiance of authority, but the highest in threats and intimidation). Much of the remainder of the state appears to have moderate rates (in most categories), relative to these extremes.

How Many Individual Victims and Offenders are

1999-2000: Victims of Law and Board Violations

	Student White Male	Student White Female	Student Black Male	Student Black Female	Student Hispan. Male	Student Hispan. Female	Student Asian Male	Student Asian Female	Student Native Male	Student Native Female	Student Other Male	Student Other Female	School Person- nel	Non- School Person-	Unk.
1999-2000	8187	4574	1158	542	53	16	8	5	7	1	69	16	2590	87	53

Identified by School Officials?

FIGURE 28: NUMBER OF VICTIMS OF SCHOOL LAW AND BOARD POLICY VIOLATIONS

Victim: An individual who is the object of an incident of prohibited act or behavior, reported to a school official or law enforcement agency.

School personnel: An employee of the school system or individual providing services to the school (contracted or unpaid); includes teachers, administrators, and other school staff members such as support staff, bus drivers, maintenance workers, school-based law enforcement officers, and volunteers.

Non-school personnel: An individual who was neither a student nor school personnel for the school reporting the incident.

1999-2000 Offenders

	Student White Male	Student White Female	Student Black Male	Student Black Female	Student Hispan. Male	Student Hispan. Female	Student Asian Male	Student Asian Female	Student Native Male	Student Native Female	Student Other Male	Student Other Female	School Person- nel	Non- School Person-	Unk.
1999-2000	25785	9035	4283	1981	176	55	41	28	14	3	102	20	24	47	57

FIGURE 29: NUMBER OF OFFENDERS OF SCHOOL LAW AND BOARD POLICY VIOLATIONS:

Offender: An individual, whether student or not, involved in committing an incident of prohibited behavior. There may be more than one offender involved in any single incident.

Offender, Unknown Identity: The offender or offenders involved in the incident are not known.

It can be seen that there are substantial numbers of individuals who can be identified as victims of the law and board policy violations documented in this report. Given that not every incident has a direct victim, it is not surprising that the number of unduplicated offenders is substantially larger than the number of victims.

School Board Policy Violations & Victim/Offender Data: A Summary

- The data show a dramatic reduction in the number of reported school board policy violations across all categories of measurement. The most noticeable change is the reduction reported in classroom disturbance, from 61,613 to 12,651 incidents across the two years.

- A substantial proportion of these changes is probably attributable to improvements in reporting accuracy across the two years, especially the reminder that only those incidents that result in one of the five disciplinary consequences are to be reported. Baseline data are probably unreliable for the purpose of direct comparison.

- Gang-related behavioral incidents show a significant decline, and are relatively rare.

- Defiance of authority, fighting, and threats and intimidation appear to result in the most severe forms of discipline.

- The most frequently administered forms of discipline are out-of-school suspension, alternative placement, and corporal punishment, in that order.

- Comparing the total number of consequences administered across two years of data collection, there is a dramatic reduction in expulsion with educational services, coupled with a significant increase in the number of out-of-school suspensions and corporal punishments.

- Regional differences are once again difficult to interpret. southeastern Kentucky has the highest overall rates of disciplinary actions, with behavior associated with aggression and defiance most prominent. Northern Kentucky has the lowest overall rates.

- There is a large number of individuals who can be identified as victims. The number of identified offenders is about three times larger. Both of these are potentially duplicated counts.

School-based efforts to control and prevent violence and substance abuse

This section reports on the range of activities schools have engaged in to insure that schools are safe. These include (1) additional safety measures to promote appropriate controls; and, (2) educative prevention and early intervention activities designed to enhance awareness of safety-related issues and promote personal and interpersonal competence. Estimates of the effectiveness of such initiatives in terms of planning, implementation, and outcome assessment are also provided.

Efforts to promote school safety can take a variety of forms. Some activities focus on modifications of the school physical environment to insure that unauthorized individuals who may have a harmful intent do not attain proximity to students. Visitor sign-in and controlled access programs are examples of this strategy. Another approach is to prevent the entry of potentially harmful weapons, objects, or substances into the school environment, using technology such as metal detectors or drug sweeps. A third approach involves staff and student training designed to enhance awareness of school safety, focusing on topics such as substance abuse, violence prevention, and conflict resolution. Kentucky schools also provide a range of individualized therapeutic and support services to students identified as "at risk" and their families. In their totality, this array of services is designed to promote school safety by increasing the personal and interpersonal competence of all of the school community.

What Additional Security Measures are Schools Taking to Promote and Insure School Safety?

Figure 30, shown below, provides data on six common security measures taken by school systems to promote and enhance school safety. Data are organized in terms of the percentage of schools that employ that measure, and the data are provided for both years.
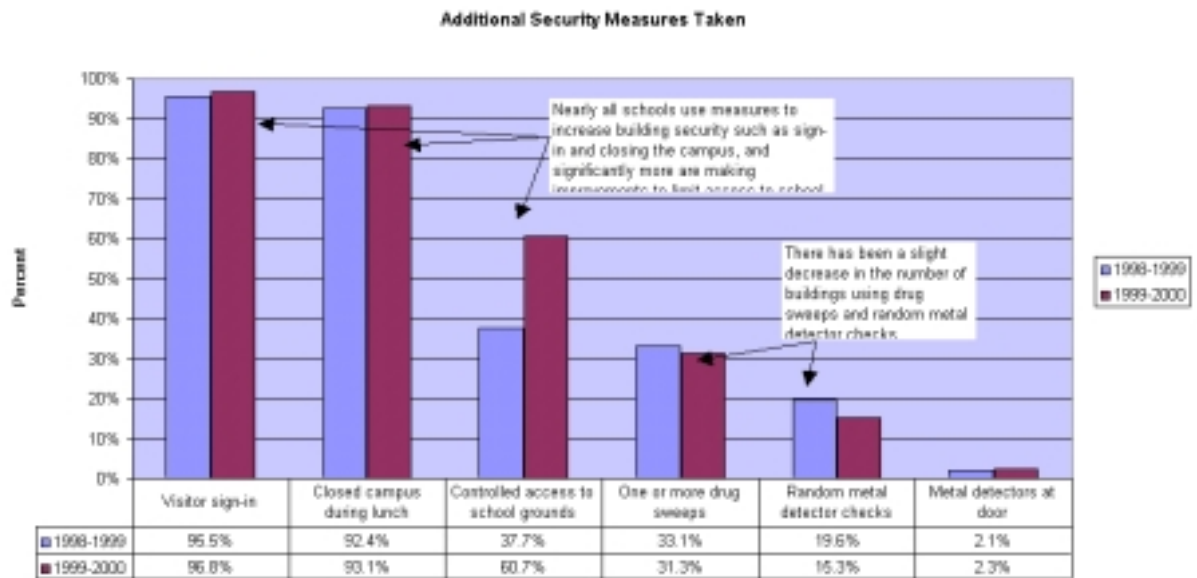
Additional Security Measures Taken

	Visitor sign-in	Closed campus during lunch	Controlled access to school grounds	One or more drug sweeps	Random metal detector checks	Metal detectors at door
1998-1999	95.5%	92.4%	37.7%	33.1%	19.6%	2.1%
1999-2000	96.8%	93.1%	60.7%	31.3%	15.3%	2.3%

FIGURE 30: ADDITIONAL SECURITY MEASURES TAKEN IN SCHOOL BUILDINGS DURING 1998-99 & 1999-2000 SCHOOL YEARS

In general, it appears that most schools use formal means to make schools secure, such as visitor sign-in and closing the campus. There is a significant rise in the number of schools that are seeking to control access to school grounds. However, there have been slight declines in the number of school buildings that employ drug sweeps and random metal detector checks. Only a very small percentage of schools use metal detectors at school entrances.

What Kinds of Violence and Substance Abuse Prevention Programs Are Schools Offering Across the Commonwealth?

School Buildings Offering Violence/Substance Abuse Prevention Programming
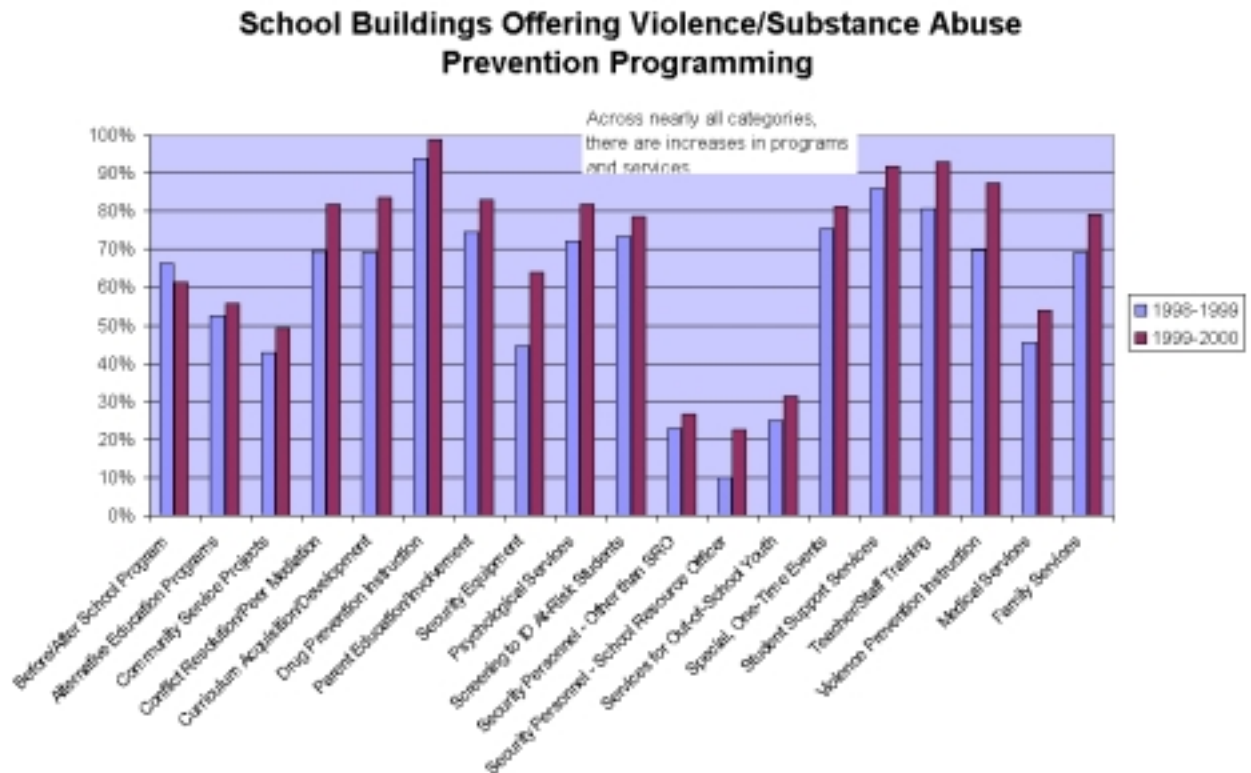
TABLE 31: PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION ACTIVITIES DURING 1998-1999 & 1999-2000 SCHOOL YEARS

Kentucky has made an extensive commitment to providing a range of services to assist students in areas related to school safety, including substance abuse, violence prevention, alternate education, parent and family involvement, and staff training. In 1999-2000, $9 million was spent specifically on school safety projects in 126 school districts.

Are Prevention and Intervention Programs being Planned, Organized, and Delivered Consistent with National Guidelines for Such Initiatives?

Figure 32 (below) shows the number of school districts that conducted systematic needs assessments to determine the nature and scope of needs in 1999-2000.

It can be seen that the majority of school districts conducted a district-wide needs assessment for both violence prevention and drug and alcohol. A substantial number of other districts conducted such needs assessments in at least one building. Presumably, these data were then used to plan and evaluate intervention efforts.
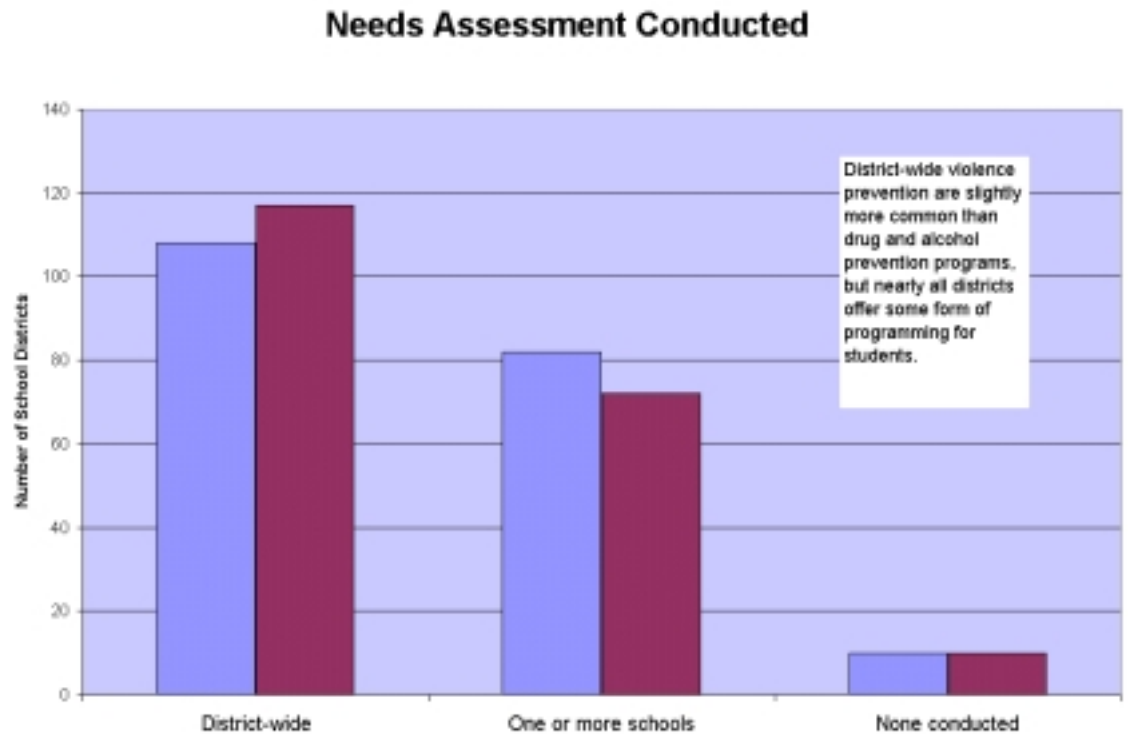
Needs Assessment Conducted

TABLE 32: NUMBER OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS CONDUCTING NEEDS ASSESSMENT IN VIOLENCE PREVENTION AND/OR DRUG AND ALCOHOL PREVENTION DURING 1999-2000 SCHOOL YEAR (TOTAL OF 179 DISTRICTS REPORTING)

Figure 33 (below) shows the number of school districts that expressed concerns about difficulties and challenges experienced in implementing their prevention program(s). Issues involved with the conduct of a needs assessment, goal formulation, and program evaluation are described. Lack of time to properly conduct these activities appears to emerge as the most significant concern.

Implementation Concerns

	No difficulty	Insufficient funds	Insufficient technical expertise	Lack of time	Low priority
Needs assessment	92	39	15	60	13
Goals and objectives	84	39	20	60	13
Evaluation	102	28	27	57	12

TABLE 33: NUMBER OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS INDICATING CHALLENGES ASSOCIATED WITH CONDUCTING NEEDS ASSESSMENTS, FORMULATING PROGRAM GOALS, AND PROGRAM EVALUATION OF PREVENTION PROGRAMS DURING 1999-2000 SCHOOL YEAR (TOTAL OF 179 DISTRICTS REPORTING)

Figure 34 (below) shows the number of school districts that engaged in program evaluation activity in relation to formulating their goals and objectives, and delineating evaluation tools.
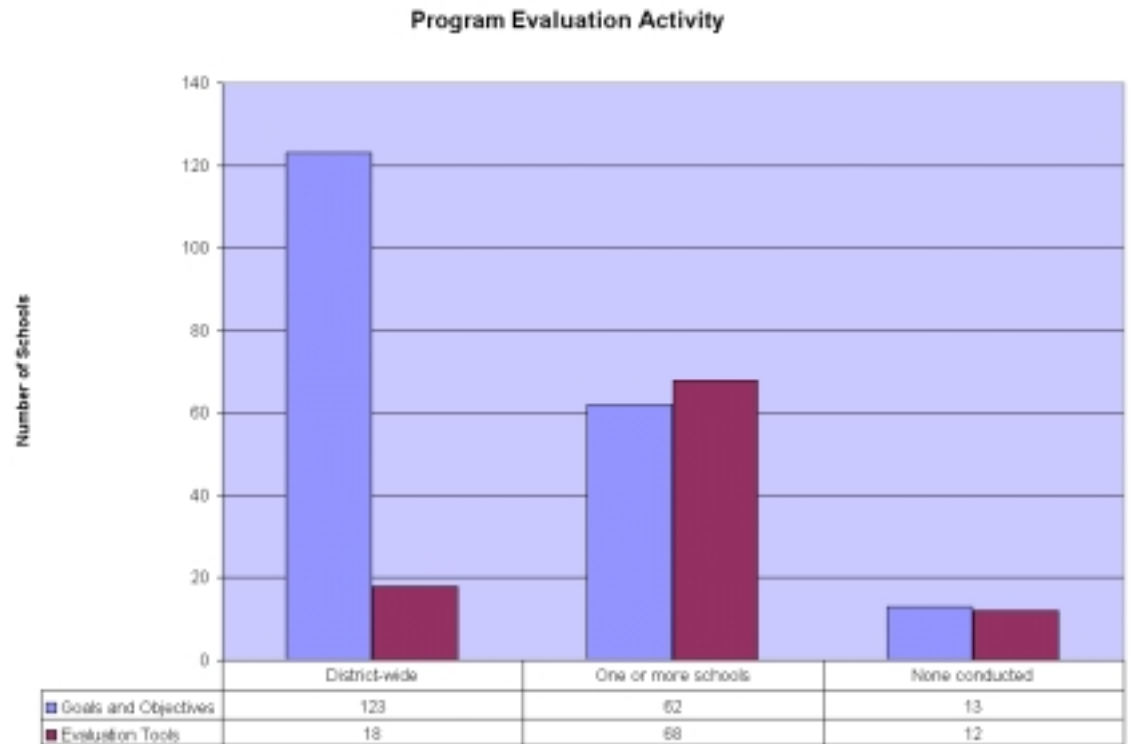
Program Evaluation Activity

	District-wide	One or more schools	None conducted
Goals and Objectives	123	62	13
Evaluation Tools	18	68	12

(Bar chart: Y-axis "Number of Schools" ranging 0 to 140)

TABLE 34: NUMBER OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS CONDUCTING PROGRAM EVALUTION ACTIVITIES WITH PREVENTION PROGRAMS DURING 1999-2000 SCHOOL YEAR (TOTAL OF 179 DISTRICTS REPORTING)

Summary

- Kentucky's schools employ a variety of additional security measures to promote school safety. Almost all school buildings require visitors to sign in and close their campus at lunch time.

- There have been significant increases in the past year in terms of the number of school buildings that seek to control access to the school grounds.

- There is a slight decrease in the number of schools that employ drug sweeps or random metal detector checks.

- Kentucky schools provide extensive prevention and early intervention services designed to prevent violence and substance abuse, and enhance school safety. These programs cover a wide range of relevant issues and needs.

- Prevention and early intervention programs appear to be implemented consistent with principles of effectiveness that emphasize systematic needs assessment, goal-setting, and implementation and outcome assessment.

Review,
Recommendations,
Resources

This section reviews the key findings of the first component of the Kentucky Safe Schools Data Project for the 1999-2000 school year, makes some general recommendations for how the school community and others can profit from these data, and delineates additional resources regarding school safety statistics and technical assistance.

Review

The Kentucky Safe Schools Data Project has completed its second year of data-gathering on law and school board policy violations, legal and disciplinary consequences, victim and offender information, security measures, and prevention efforts in schools. Mandated by Kentucky Revised Statute 158, the project is a collaboration between the Kentucky Center for School Safety, Research Triangle Institute of North Carolina (web-enabled data entry), R.E.A.C.H. of Louisville, (statistical analysis), and the Kentucky Department of Education.

The present report delineates statewide and regional totals for the 1999-2000 school year, and will be followed by reports providing more refined description of these same data in relation to gender, race, grade level, socio-economic, and related variables, and school district comparative data. The overall purpose of these reports are to: supply educators, parents and community with general descriptive information about school safety, (2) provide state and local school officials with more detailed information that can inform school improvement efforts and reduce risk to students,; and, (3) enable

judgments to be made about the extent to which schools are becoming more safe environments for learning.

Nationally, there is considerable evidence that schools are becoming more safe. Since 1992, the total number of school-associated violent deaths has decreased. There is less than one in a million chance of violent death in school. The most common crime in schools is theft, which has been trending downward since 1993, as have student weapon carrying and physical fighting. All of these declines mirror drops in the overall crime rate in society. At the same time, there are serious and abiding concerns at the national level. Too many children and school personnel are the victims of violent crime in schools, weapon carrying remains a concern, students report that they do not always feel safe, drug and alcohol use on school property has not subsided, and a wide range of disciplinary problems continue to impede teaching and learning in schools.

<u>Kentucky data</u>

- Violations of law (ranging from serious crimes against persons or property, to less serious crimes that may result in arrest) have declined significantly, according to school reports. The magnitude of some of these declines may be a function of measurement error in the first year of data gathering, but the results are still encouraging.

- Violations that appear resistant to change are those associated with alcohol use, buying or receiving stolen property, sex-related offenses (not including rape or prostitution), and possession of non-firearm weapons.

- There have also been dramatic declines across the two years in the number of school–reported suspensions, expulsions, and alternative placements associated with law violations.

- Some concern regarding school compliance with mandated reporting to law enforcement is suggested by the data.

- Regional comparisons of rates of law violations reveal considerable variability from one category to another. The highest rates of simple assault, larceny/theft, and drug violations occur in the southeastern portion of the state, in contrast with high rates of aggravated assault in Jefferson County and the far western part of the state.

- Regarding school board policy violations, dramatic reductions in incidence are even more apparent than what is seen for law violations (probably because baseline data are more unreliable).

- Defiance of authority, fighting, and threats and intimidation result in the most severe forms of school discipline.

- The most common punishments (of the five tracked) are suspension, alternative placement, and corporal punishment (in that order).

- Over the two years of data-gathering, there is a dramatic reduction in expulsion with educational services, and a concomitant increase in the number of suspensions and corporal punishments.

- Analysis of regional differences reveals that southeastern Kentucky has the highest rates of discipline (especially for infractions involving aggression and defiance of authority), and northern Kentucky has the lowest.

- A total of 17,366 individuals (students, staff, and others) were reported as victims of school violence (in all its forms) in 1999-2000.

- Kentucky's schools continue to increase the security measures employed to keep students safe, with 96.8% requiring visitor sign-in and 93.1% closing the school campus during lunch. Significant effort has gone into controlling access to school grounds, but there have been slight declines in the use of drug sweeps and random metal detectors.

- Virtually all school buildings offer one or more prevention or early intervention programs, and the percent of offerings within each category has increased in nearly all categories of programming.

- These programs appear to be implemented consistent with recognized principles of effectiveness.

Recommendations

- It appears that the data quality in 1999-2000 was significantly improved, relative to 1998-1999. In fact, data from the current year may represent a more accurate baseline from which to draw conclusions about change over time. Continued effort should go into clarifying behavioral categories and definitions to insure that data are reliable and accurate.

- Fundamentally, the data presented in the two reports (1998-1999 and the present report) can only have meaning at the local, regional, and state levels when schools and communities "breathe life" into the numbers. There are no simple conclusions that can be drawn, and there will be no simple solutions. The process of translating "data" into "information" requires that people make judgments about what the data mean. It is recommended that local, regional, and state-level planning committees review these data, compare them to other kinds of information available, decide what further information is required (including less formal data gathering, such as talking with students, teachers, and parents), and translate what they learn into concrete actions that promote school safety. Technical assistance and training from the Kentucky Center for

School Safety and the Kentucky Department of Education can help to guide these efforts (see inset below).

❑ In terms of action planning at various levels, the perspective that "complex problems require complex solutions" seems salient. Once these and other data have been understood, it is recommended that programs be built on a "theory of change" that makes clear what behaviors are to be targeted, how these behaviors relate to the overall concepts of violence prevention and school safety, and what specific activities will occur to facilitate change and goal attainment.

Training and Technical Assistance

Developing and maintaining safe schools will require the support and involvement of many constituencies both within and outside the school systems. Under the Safe Schools Act (KRS 158), the Center for School Safety (CSS) and the Kentucky Department of Education are required to provide training and technical assistance to a wide range of audiences including school administrators, teachers, students, law enforcement, post-secondary educators, parents and community representatives. Enhancing the safety of learning environments demands that a comprehensive, well planned, implemented and evaluated training (professional development) system be established.

To reduce the enormity of the challenge, the CSS has adopted a Conceptual Framework which focuses on a multi-level strategy addressing the needs of three sub-populations of students. This three-tiered system of positive behavior support provides appropriate support and supervision for all students, by informing and directing the efforts of all faculty, staff, and students.

Three coordinated training and technical assistance initiatives have been undertaken by the CSS directed toward specific targeted audiences: schools and communities, post-secondary education and justice/law enforcement. Professional development opportunities are available to the public in a variety of areas and through both on-site and distance learning venues. Ongoing needs assessments highlight specific technical assistance needs which may partner CSS with specific agencies or school districts to meet those needs. The results of these needs assessments also provide direction for future CSS training and technical assistance which may be addressed through on-site or distance learning opportunities.

The CSS training and technical assistance efforts utilize both onsite and distance learning opportunities— including statewide videoconferences through KET's Star Channels, compressed video through Kentucky Telelinking Network (KTLN) and satellite-based in-service training. Regional Workshops and Statewide Conferences provided in multiple locations provide participants with information about recent trends and effective strategies in the areas of student discipline and school safety.

The CSS, in partnership with the Kentucky School Boards Association and the Kentucky Department of Education, co-sponsors and coordinates the Annual Safe Schools Conference at the Galt House in Louisville.

Resources

Violence and Discipline Problems in U.S. Public Schools: 1996-97

US Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement
Document # NCES 98-030
Available at http://nces.ed.gov/pubs98/violence/index.html

Indicators of School Crime and Safety: 1999

US Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement
Document # NCES 1999-057
US Department of Juvenile Justice, Office of Justice Programs
Document # NCJ-178906
Available at http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/

Annual Report on School Safety: 1999

US Department of Education
Available at http://www.ed.gov/pubs/AnnSchoolRept99

Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Survey: 1998

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Available at http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dash

Kentucky Safe Schools Data Project

1998-1999 Statistical Report
Available at http://www.kysafeschools.org/clear/analys.html

Compendium of Federal Reports on School Safety

Hamilton Fish Institute
Available at http://www.hamfish.org/statistics/fedrep.php3
Summaries of Various Statistical Studies on School Safety

National School Safety Center
Available at http://www.nssc1.org/

Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Program

Available at http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/SDFS/

Funding Availability

KRS 158, which establishes the Center for School Safety (CSS), calls for the appropriation of funding to support a school safety grant process. During FY 1999 the Kentucky Department of Education oversaw the awarding of $4 million to 74 school districts to support alternative education programming. With approval from the Board of Directors, the CSS funded 90 grants with an approximate $9 million expenditure in 1999-2000.

In FY2001, for the first time since the General Assembly's 1998 passage of major safe schools legislation, all Kentucky public school systems will receive funding from a state program designed to support school safety and violence prevention strategies. The Center for School Safety (CSS) has awarded $11 million in grants to all 176 public school systems, the Kentucky School for the Deaf and the Kentucky School for the Blind for the 2000-2001 school year. A table listing allocations for FY200-2001 is now available.

Oldham County Supt. Blake Haselton, chairman of the Center's Board of Directors, said, "During the first two years of this program, school safety funds were distributed on a competitive basis. However, based on a recommendation from our board, a different formula was approved by the General Assembly earlier this year."

The new formula for distributing the safety grants calls for every district to receive a base of $20,000 with the remaining funds distributed on a "per pupil" basis, Haselton said. Based on current statewide enrollment, districts receive between $12 and $13 per student. 2000-2001 Funds are distributed by the Kentucky Department of Education in collaboration with CSS.

Although all districts are funded under the new plan, they were required to submit applications outlining the types of programs or services that will be implemented with these monies. Based on these applications, 73 percent of the districts are using these funds to support alternative education programs for students who exhibit disruptive or violent behavior or are at risk of academic failure. Alternative education programs provide academic instruction, emotional support and behavior management services to meet the individual needs of students who are at risk of school failure.

Other proposed strategies supported with 2000-2001 safe school funds include intervention services in traditional school settings (i.e. in-school counseling, mentoring programs, or classroom instruction focusing on conflict resolution and anger management), training programs for school staff and parents, school resource officers (specialized law enforcement officers who work in school settings), and security equipment such as metal detectors and surveillance cameras. "Based on our review of the applications, most school districts are focusing their funds on middle and high school students," said Haselton.

Another requirement of the state funding is an evaluation process. Haselton said the most common indicators being used by schools to examine the impact of their safety efforts were reductions in student absenteeism, reductions in school dropouts, reductions in suspensions and expulsions, and improvements in academic performance. This on-going evaluation provides for the identification and reporting of data regarding program activities and outcomes with regard to both process and outcome components. CSS Staff encourages program personnel to seek the services of professional researchers for assistance, and has compiled a list of qualified persons able to contract with programs to assist with evaluation plans.

Over the course of the next four years, the CSS will compile and analyze data regarding the outcomes associated with various Kentucky-based strategies for the enhancement of school safety. Based upon this data collection and analysis process, the CSS will prepare reports to the Commonwealth on those promising strategies associated with significant differences in the safety of students and educators in schools and the overall climate of schools to enhance teaching and learning.